

ski *balkan* magazine

March 2026, N° 6

6. SPE BALKAN SKI Conference

Kranjska Gora, March 2026



SPE BALKAN
SKI

Science, Practice & Education



- **Mr. Eric Sheckleton**,
President Interski International - Interview
- **Mr. Jure Košir**, Slovenian ski legend - Interview
- Kranjska Gora - **Where the adventure begins**
- Ski extreme - **Descent of the century**
- Deep powder - **Hokaido Japan, is the place to be**

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INTRODUCTION – magazin 2026

SPE Balkan Ski 2026 - At the Crossroads of Science, Practice, and Education in Snowsport

In March 2026, Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, will once again become a meeting point for the international snowsports community as it hosts the SPE Balkan Ski Conference – Science, Practice & Education, a congress that has grown into a widely recognized international platform across Europe and beyond.

From its very beginning, SPE Balkan Ski has been driven by a clear vision: to connect science, practice, and education in snowsports within a single, open, and collaborative environment. Over more than a decade, this vision has matured into a conference that brings together ski instructors, coaches, researchers, educators, demo teams, and industry representatives from across the world—creating a unique space where knowledge, experience, and innovation meet on and off the snow.

The 2026 edition further confirms the international standing of the conference. We are honoured that it will be attended by the highest representatives of Interski International, including the President and Vice Presidents as well as all but one of the board members of IAESS – International Association of Education and Science in Snowsport, the Interski Educational Hub, which has continuously supported the development of SPE Balkan Ski over the years. This strong institutional presence reflects the growing relevance of the conference within the global snowsports community.

This year, we expect more than 130 participants from Europe, USA, and Asia. Invited speakers and contributors include well-established experts from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, and the USA. Together, they will address key topics in snowsports education, technique, coaching, leadership, training, nutrition, equipment, and innovation.

The conference programme combines high-quality theoretical contributions with practical on-snow workshops, led by national demo teams—among the best skiers and educators of their countries—who will present good practices directly in the natural environment where snowsports truly come to life. Kranjska Gora, with its outstanding alpine setting, once again offers an ideal backdrop for learning, experience, and inspiration. In parallel with the main conference programme, the 2026 edition will also host a dedicated symposium entitled EASE – Empowering Academic Snowsport Education. This integrated event will place a special focus on the exchange of good practices, knowledge, and experiences in the education of snowsport professionals within schools and universities. The EASE symposium builds directly on the highly successful first academic meeting held in Bulgaria and hosted by the National Sport Academy in 2025, which was directly supported by IAESS. This symposium represents an important step forward in strengthening international academic collaboration in snowsport education.

Beyond lectures and workshops, networking, exchange of experience, informal discussion, and social interaction remain the defining strengths and trademarks of the SPE Balkan Ski Conference. Today, this ability to connect people, ideas, and cultures across borders is internationally recognised as one of the conference's greatest values.

We warmly welcome all participants to Kranjska Gora and to the SPE Balkan Ski Conference 2026—a place where science, practice, and education meet on snow, and where the future of snowsports continues to be shaped together. Set in the heart of the Julian Alps, at the crossroads of Slovenia, Italy, and Austria, Kranjska Gora is a renowned Slovenian ski resort whose unique location perfectly symbolizes the spirit of connection and collaboration that defines this conference!



Prof. Rado Pišot, Ph.D.
(Chairman of the Scientific
Committee)



Dr. Blaž Lešnik, Ph.D.
(Chairman of Organizing
Committee)



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STARI TRG 1, LJUBLJANA

PeakPerformance

POLO
RALPH LAUREN

VEJA

BJÖRN BORG



J.LINDBERBERG



Columbia



Dear readers, Welcome to 6th Balkan Ski conference – Kranjska Gora, Slovenia 2026.

As Editor-in-Chief of Balkan Ski Magazine, it is my great honor to welcome you to our 6th conference — a gathering that carries more meaning today than ever before.

We meet in a time when snow is no longer something we can take for granted. Across our mountains, from the Julian Alps to the Šar Mountains, winters are shorter, seasons less predictable, and the white landscapes that define our passion are increasingly fragile. Climate change is no longer a distant warning; it is a visible reality on our slopes. And yet, too often, as societies, we respond with hesitation rather than resolve.

We also gather at a time when the world around us feels unsettled. Armed conflicts continue to shake regions far too close to home. Democratic values — the very foundation upon which cooperation and open exchange are built — face growing pressure from illiberal leaders who question institutions, media freedom, and the principles of pluralism. The public space is louder, but often less tolerant. In such times, one might ask: what is the role of skiing? What is the role of a regional ski community, of an industry, of a magazine? I believe the answer is both simple and profound.

Skiing unites us.

It unites nations that once stood apart. It connects mountain communities across borders. It brings together athletes, resort operators, environmental scientists, journalists, and families who share a common love for winter. On snow, differences diminish. Gravity is impartial. The mountain demands respect from all of us equally. Our Balkan region has always been diverse — culturally, politically, historically. Yet when we stand at the top of a slope, whether in Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, or beyond, we share the same anticipation before the descent. The same silence before the first turn. The same joy at the bottom.

This conference is not only about technology, tourism, investment, or competition calendars. It is about responsibility. Responsibility to protect winter. Responsibility to speak honestly about climate change. Responsibility to defend open dialogue and democratic values within our sporting institutions and our societies. And responsibility to cooperate across borders in a region that knows too well the cost of division.

If snow is becoming rarer, then our commitment must become stronger. If public discourse is becoming more polarized, then our community must become more inclusive. If democracy is challenged, then our gatherings — open, international, collaborative — are themselves acts of quiet resistance.

Skiing teaches balance. It teaches adaptation. It teaches that progress requires both courage and control. These are lessons our societies could use far beyond the slopes.

As we open this 6th conference, I invite you not only to exchange knowledge and build partnerships, but to reaffirm what binds us together. Let us prove that even in uncertain times, the spirit of the mountains endures — resilient, cooperative, forward-looking. Snow may be less certain. The world may be more complex. But our shared passion remains a powerful force.

And that force unites us.

Damijan Kuki Ambrožič



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Radovljica, Slovenia



Winter in Kranjska Gora

KRANJSKA GORA

Where the adventure begins

On the edge of Triglav National Park, in the heart of the Julian Alps, lies the alpine resort **KRANJSKA GORA**. Surrounded by dramatic mountain peaks and pristine forests, it is one of Slovenia's most famous year-round destinations. With well-maintained ski slopes, excellent family facilities, and easy accessibility, Kranjska Gora is widely recognized as a top choice for winter sports enthusiasts and families seeking an authentic Alpine experience.

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Skiing at the Doorstep of Your Hotel

Kranjska Gora's ski resort offers over 20 kilometres of well-maintained slopes, stretching from 800 to 1,215 metres above sea level, making it ideal for beginners, families, and recreational skiers. One of the destination's greatest advantages is its

compact layout – between your hotel and the ski slopes lies only the popular Snow Beach. It forms the vibrant connection between the ski slopes and accommodation, bringing together ski schools, equipment rentals, cafés, and restaurants.

Ski schools and equipment rental shops are located just steps from the slopes, ensuring easy access for both first-time skiers and experienced enthusiasts. Thanks to advanced snowmaking systems, the ski season traditionally begins as early as late November, providing reliable snow conditions throughout the winter.

Kranjska Gora is also internationally recognized as the venue of two Alpine Skiing World Cup events – women's and men's competitions – held on the legendary Vittranc racecourse, where top athletes compete each year in front of enthusiastic crowds.



Planica - The Valley of World Records

Just minutes from Kranjska Gora lies Planica, a true temple of ski jumping and one of Slovenia's most iconic sporting landmarks, home to one of the world's largest ski flying hills. Known as the Valley of World Championships, Planica hosts the spectacular final event of the Ski Jumping World Cup season, drawing thousands of fans from around the world.

Here, history was made with the current world record ski jump of 254.5 metres, confirming Planica's legendary status in winter sports. A new attraction further enriches the experience: the 900-square-metre Ice Rink Ledena Planica, where visitors can enjoy skating surrounded by dramatic Alpine peaks.

Planica also offers stunning cross country skiing trail and serves as the starting point for unforgettable winter hiking adventures into the Tamar Valley, offering pristine nature, snow-covered landscapes, and breathtaking mountain views.

A Culinary Retreat in the Alps

Kranjska Gora surprises visitors with an outstanding culinary scene. The highlight is Restaurant Milka, located on the idyllic location near Lake Jasna, proudly awarded two Michelin stars and internationally recognized for its innovative gastronomic approach.





NAPRAVE / LIFTS

- 1 [L] Kekec
- 2 [L] Mojca 1
- 3 [L] Rožle
- 4 [L] Mojca 2
- 5 [L] Dolenčev rut
- 6 [L] Vitranc 1
- 7 [L] Brsnina
- 8 [L] Podkoren
- 9 [L] Kolovrat
- 10 [L] Bedanc
- 11 [L] Velika dolina
- 13 [L] Vitranc 2
- 14 [L] Mojstrana

SMUČARSKÉ PROGE / SLOPES

- Proga 1 / Slope 1
- Proga 2 / Slope 2
- Proga 3 / Slope 3
- Proga 4 / Slope 4
- Proga 5 / Slope 5
- Proga 6 / Slope 6
- Proga 7 / Slope 7
- Proga 8 / Slope 8
- Proga 9 / Slope 9
- Proga 10 / Slope 10
- Proga 11 / Slope 11
- Proga 12 / Slope 12
- Proga 13 / Slope 13
- Proga 14 / Slope 14
- Proga 15 / Slope 15
- Proga 16 / Slope 16
- Proga 17 / Slope 17
- Proga 20 / Slope 20
- Proga 21 / Slope 21

TEKAŠKE PROGE / CROSS-COUNTRY TRAILS

- Enostavna / Easiest
- Srednja / Medium
- Težko / Diffcult

From contemporary fine dining to authentic Alpine cuisine, the destination offers a rich variety of flavors. Traditional inns and family-run restaurants preserve generations-old recipes, serving hearty local dishes that reflect the region's cultural heritage and close connection to nature.

Relaxation with Spectacular Mountain Views

After an active day on the slopes or snowy trails, Kranjska Gora invites you to slow down and recharge. Modern hotel wellness centers offer saunas, pools, and spa experiences with panoramic views of snow-covered landscapes and Alpine peaks. Treat your body to the care it deserves and remember: true balance comes from combining movement, nature, and rest.

BALKAN SKI MAGAZINE
Damijan Ambrožič



Scientific programme - 6th SPE BALKAN SKI Conference

08.

Sunday, 8th March 2026

Arrivals

Arrivals

15:00-17:00

17:00-18:30

19:00-20:00

20:00-21:00

21:00-23:00

REGISTRATION

Lobby
of the Ramada

Check in

IAESS -International Association for Education & Science in Snowsport General Assembly -
IAESS members only (on-site and remotely), Hotel Ramada Resort ZELENCI /1st floor)

REGISTRATION - Lobby of Ramada Hotel

DINNER

WELCOME DRINK - Lobby of the Ramada Hotel

09.

Monday, 9th March 2026

8:00-10:00

9:00-10:00

10:00-14:00

10:00-13:00

13:00-14:00

15:30-16:15

16:15-17:00

17:00-17:30

17:30-18:00

18:00-18:10

18:10-18:20

18:20-18:30

18:30-18:40

18:40-18:50

18:50-19:00

19:00-19:10

19:10-19:20

19:20-19:30

19:30-19:40

19:40-19:50

20:00-21:00

21:00-23:00

REGISTRATION - Lobby of Ramada Hotel

DEMO TEAMS LEADERS MEETING - Lobby Hotel Ramada

ELAN ski test

SNOW WORKSHOPS – DEMO TEAMS BUL & BIH - Meeting point in front of the Hotel

LUNCH - Restaurant

OPENING CEREMONY - Addresses by local, national and international authorities and Interski
President, Mr. Eric Shekleton, USA - Interski International-Bringing the World Together-Shaping
the Future of Snowsports Instruction. Ramada Hotel Resort Conference Room PLANICA

Plenary: Paul Garner, UK - HUMILITY AS A COACHING VIRTUE: A PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE

Keynote lecture: Andrew Horrell, UK - Using questions to enhance learning in snowsports

Keynote lecture: Dieter Bubeck, GER- "The largest ski school is the school itself" – Benefits

10-min break

Iza Šraj Miklič, SLO - Vastus Lateralis Contractile Properties and Physical Performance
in Youth Alpine Skiers According to Maturity Status

Milena Zdravcheva, BUL - Accelerometric monitoring of physical activity in physiotherapy
students during a 'snow sports' course at the national sports academy 'vasil levski':
effectiveness of short-term motor interventions

Krastyo Zgurovski, BUL - Functional relationship between stance preference (regular/goofy)
and lower-limb strength in snowboarding

Stojan Puhelj, SLO - Relationship of variables of the ironman test battery with the performance
of alpine skiers in fis competitions

Custom made skis - ORIGINAL +

Mateja Očić, CRO - Kinematic turn asymmetry in giant slalom skiing: a comparative case study

Ilija Klincharov, NME - The influence of motion guidance and the ski boot canting
on single-leg balance in young recreational skiers

Lana Ruzic Svegl, CRO - Was sars-cov-2 circulating undetected?

A cluster of severe influenza-like illness during a university ski course in january 2020

Deyan Todorov, BUL - Dynamics and frequency of incidents in the practice of snow sports
in pamorovo resort-bulgaria for seasons 2023-2025

Tomaž Šegula, SLO - Joint technical camps as a strategy for talent development
in slovenian alpine skiing

DINNER

TORCH LIGHT SNOW HIKE

Scientific programme - 6th SPE BALKAN SKI Conference

10.

Tuesday, 10th March 2026

8:00-10:00 **REGISTRATION - Lobby of Ramada Hotel**
10:00-13:00 FISHER ski test
10:00-13:00 SNOW WORKSHOPS – DEMO TEAM SRB & SKI EASY - Meeting point in front of the Hotel

13:00-14:00

LUNCH - Restaurant

15:00-15:45 Plenary: Vanessa Mann, GER - PHYSIOLOGICAL ADAPTATIONS TO ALPINE SKIING IN OLDER
15:45-16:15 Keynote lecture: Kaja Teraž, SLO - Fueling the Cold: Snowsport Nutrition for Performance &
16:15-16:45 Keynote lecture: Sandi Murovec, SLO - National Programme of Racing Skiing
16:45-17:15 Keynote Lecture: Hannes Rottensteiner, AUT - The methodical approach
by training turning elements according to „Differential Learning“
17:15-17:25 Ski wear DIEL

18:00-20:00

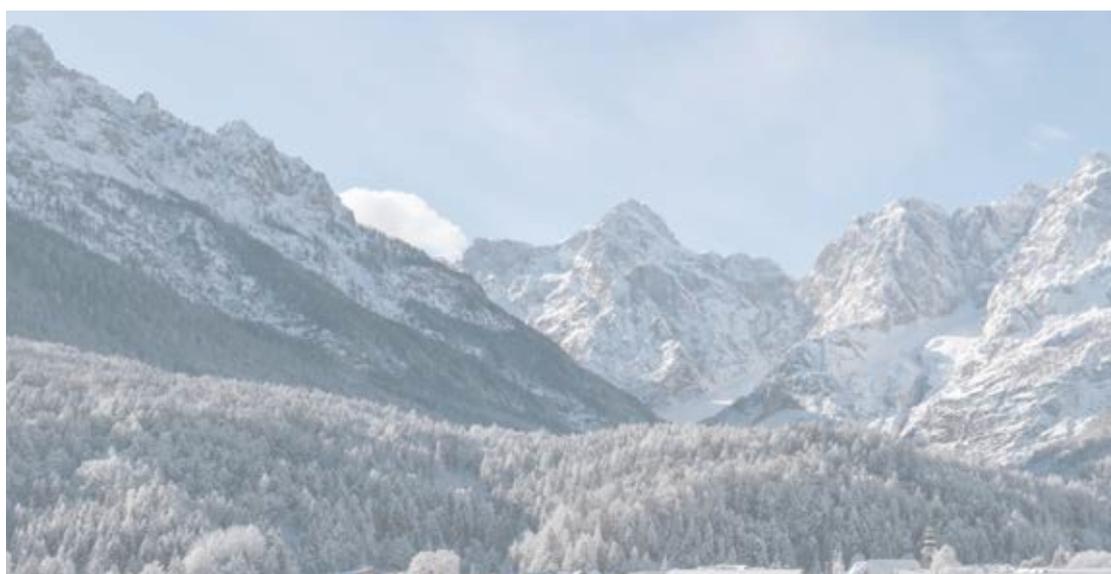
DEMO TEAM SHOW

20:00-21:00

DINNER

21:00-23:00

SOCIAL EVENING - SNOWMAN PARTY



KRANJSKA GORA



Scientific programme - 6th SPE BALKAN SKI Conference



11.

Wednesday, 11th March 2026

8:00-10:00	REGISTRATION - Lobby of Ramada Hotel
10:00-13:00	Custom-made skis - ORIGINAL + ski test
10:00-13:00	SNOW WORKSHOPS – DEMO TEAMS SLO & AUT - Meeting point in front of the Hotel
13:00-14:00	LUNCH - Restaurant
15:30-16:15	Plenary: Uroš Marušič, SLO - BRAIN-CENTERED PERFORMANCE MODELING IN ALPINE SKIING: NEUROSCIENCE MEETS BIOMECHANICS
16:15-17:00	Keynote lecture: Pete Allison, USA - Professions and Professionals in Snowsports Education
17:00-17:30	Keynote lecture: David Schuiling, USA - Making People Skills Visible: From Snowsports Education to the Future of Professional Credentials
17:30-17:40	10-min break
17:40-17:50	Dave Gregory, USA - Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Support of Staff Readiness and Professional Learning
17:50-18:00	Saša Pišot, SLO- Empowering women in alpine skiing: challenges and opportunities in coaching careers
18:00-18:10	Ana Cikač, SLO - Balancing life and career in female alpine ski coaching
18:10-18:20	Ski servis, rentals and lockers Reichmann
18:20-18:30	Ski wax revolution Gigaglode
18:30-18:40	Nika Šuc, SLO - The role of para-alpine skiing in the resocialization of athletes with acquired disabilities
18:40-18:50	Nelli Heiskanen, FIN - The Whole Mountain: A Holistic Understanding of Retention Among Skilled Seasonal Professionals
18:50-19:00	Matej Majerič, SLO - Physical strain of recreational alpine skiing: a five-day case study
19:00-19:10	Cerasela Domokos, ROM - Lupeni Mountain Rescue between history and operational practice
19:10-19:20	Rubert Salerno, SMR- A new era of skiing. The cultural factors behind the technical revolution
19:20-19:30	Aleš Florjančič, SLO - Sports coordination of student-athletes in secondary vocational education
20:00-21:00	DINNER
21:00-23:00	FAREWELL SOCIAL EVENT



12.

Thursday, 12th March 2026

10:00-11:00	CLOSING & FAREWELL - Lobby of Ramada Hotel
11:00-12:00	DEPARTURES

Skiing Extreme

THE DESCENT OF THE CENTURY



Last autumn, the mountaineering and wider sporting community — especially ski-mountaineering websites — was almost shaken to its core. Barely had everyone managed to report that the Pole Andrzej Bargiel had skied continuously from the summit of the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, without oxygen or Sherpa support, when an even bigger and, from a media standpoint, more sensational piece of news emerged. Just over a week later, the American Jim Morrison skied the "superdirezissima" on the mountain's north face — practically the most beautiful possible line down Sagarmatha, the Nepalese name for Everest. The line combines two mountaineering routes: the Hornbein Couloir and the Japanese Couloir. It almost reads like fiction.

When I first heard the news—having skied quite a few serious lines and climbed numerous routes myself—I could only exclaim in astonishment: "Finally!"

The Hornbein–Japanese Couloir line on the Tibetan (north) side of the mountain had long been my own wish—an "unfulfilled dream," like so many others for people like me. For anyone who knew anything about skiing the impossible, or who aspired to the hardest of the hard, this line was the ultimate "wet dream"—with the emphasis on dream.

Most others didn't even believe it could be done. Only when Jim and his late partner Hilaree brought the idea back into discussion a few years ago did they remind the rest of us that this particular "debt," as we alpinists say, still existed in the Himalayas.

To start skiing from the summit of the highest mountain in the world, continue down the Hornbein Couloir—with its average gradient of up to 50 degrees, placing it firmly in the realm of extreme ski mountaineering—and then traverse steep slopes into the Japanese Couloir and finish on the Rongbuk Glacier—this is a Line with a capital L. The Hornbein is well known to climbers from the former Yugoslavia because of the tragic night endured by Šrauf (Stane Belak), Stipe (Božič), and Sherpa Ang Phu, who bivouacked there, survived, descended further, and then—just before rescue—the Sherpa slipped to his death.

When I was still processing Bargiel's descent and Morrison's achievement, I could only mutter: "What the hell?" Then I began looking more closely at the details.

THE FIRST “SKI” FROM SAGARMATHA

Sagarmatha—“Holy Mother” or “Head of the Sky,” as the Nepalese call Everest—is arguably a more fitting name than the Western one, given in honor of the surveyor who measured its height from the Indian plains.

The first official descent attempt was made by Japanese skier Yuichiro Miura on May 16, 1970. He launched himself from just below the South Col (around 7,900 m), skiing down the icy slope with a parachute on his back. He descended nearly 2,000 vertical meters in 2 minutes and 20 seconds, the skis screeching loudly beneath him (as documented in a 1975 film). He had no idea he would stop only about 75 vertical meters short of flying off into crevassed terrain—knowledge of how to fly like a bird would have helped at that point. For 400 meters he slid uncontrollably, and the braking parachute did little to help. He was eventually picked up by helicopter—shaken but not badly injured—so he never skied through the Khumbu Icefall. Although he entered the Guinness Book of Records, many in mountaineering circles questioned the legitimacy of the “feat.”

Remarkably, Miura never tired of the mountain. He summited again in 2003, then at age 75 in 2008, and finally at 80 in 2013, becoming the oldest person to stand on its summit. Each time he climbed with one of his sons, Gota Miura, despite numerous surgeries and age-related health issues.



MANY ATTEMPTS

Miura’s fall and his failure to ski the Icefall meant that his descent was never taken too seriously among alpinists. The question of a true ski descent from the highest mountain remained open.

The next notable effort came in 1992, when Frenchman Pierre Tardivel skied from the South Summit (8,760 m) to Camp II, using supplemental oxygen and descending on foot to base camp. At the time, it was an altitude record.

Then came Tyrolean Hans Kammerlander. Due to terrible conditions—strong winds had scoured the mountain bare—he began skiing about 300 meters below the summit and removed his skis twice during the descent to downclimb sections of about 150 vertical meters each. Though an exceptional Himalayan climber, he later admitted to me personally that he was disappointed. He said

that to accomplish something like this, one must first be an outstanding skier and only then a strong Himalayan alpinist—and, regrettably, he felt he was not the former.

Dominique Perret attempted the north side in 1996, in pure alpine style—no porters, no oxygen. Despite three serious summit attempts that left him exhausted, he skied from around 8,500 meters down to Advanced Base Camp. The determination alone was extraordinary.





French snowboarder Marc Siffredi descended the Norton Couloir in 2001 to ABC without ropes—considered the second continuous descent from the summit on the north side. However, he removed his board multiple times due to wind-scoured slopes. The following year, he returned, summited, and began snowboarding again. He was last seen entering the Hornbein Couloir. He was never seen again, nor was his body found.

Interestingly, Siffredi climbed and descended without supplemental oxygen. I spoke to him once at the ISPO trade fair, where he winked and remarked: “With a little help from grass, you can achieve quite a lot.”

THE FIRST TRUE CONTINUOUS SKI DESCENT

When Slovenia’s Davo Karničar skied continuously from the summit to base camp on the Nepalese side in 2000, it was considered the first genuine full descent. Yes, he used oxygen and Sherpa support on the ascent—but no one guided him by drone through the Khumbu Icefall, arguably the most dangerous technical section, even more so than the summit slopes. The Hillary Step posed another challenge.

Though several others followed—eight more descents from the summit, some without oxygen—most rappelled sections or ended at ABC or Camp II, not skiing the Icefall. Consequently, the media paid little attention.

Notably, when Slovenian media reported this year’s Polish and American descents, almost all failed to mention Karničar’s achievement. In my view, a rather shameful ignorance of our own mountaineering history.

THIS YEAR’S “MIRACLES”

Stripped of media hype and Red Bull fanfare, both descents are undeniably great achievements—but perhaps not as unbelievable as portrayed. They build on decades of experience, improved equipment, advanced training knowledge, precise weather forecasting, and modern communication technology. Progress is inevitable.

After Bargiel’s K2 descent, it felt only a matter of time before Everest would “fall”—as the British say—“by fair means.”





Still, Morrison removed his skis and downclimbed about 200 meters in the Hornbein due to poor snow conditions. His team used oxygen, fixed ropes, and Sherpa support—quite different from Perret or Siffredi's solo alpine style. Only five people had climbed that couloir before; Morrison's team delivered twelve to the summit, as Jimmy Chin joked. At the summit, Morrison scattered the ashes of his late partner Hilaree Nelson, who had disappeared on Manaslu two years earlier. The Super Line had been their shared dream. After this emotional moment, he began skiing at around 2 p.m. Conditions were poor—wind-scoured, icy, treacherous. Only below Camp III did they improve. Four hours later, reaching the Rongbuk Glacier, he grasped what he had accomplished.

So what now? Do we wait for the next "Siffredi"—alone, perhaps recklessly bold—to ski or snowboard the Super Line from the summit in one continuous push, without oxygen?

Joking aside, both achievements are extraordinary contributions to the history of high-altitude skiing. A short clip from the Hornbein Couloir says it all: this is true extreme ski mountaineering.

The southwest ridge from Nepal may be iconic, but the north face—with its two-kilometer-high wall, shadowed and snow-laden—is the true arena of a magnificent descent.

To align perfect snow conditions, the best day of one's life, flawless execution—and survival—is almost fairy-tale rare.

Dejan Ogrinec

Source: SOKOL Magazine

HATS OFF TO THE POLE

Bargiel executed his descent in impeccable style: no oxygen, no porters, carrying his own skis. Supported only by radio guidance and drone footage from his brother, who advised him on conditions and route choices—an invaluable aid. After four previous 8,000-meter ski descents and two Everest attempts, he was ready. He skied from the summit in superb snow conditions, spent the night at Camp II, and continued through the Icefall to base camp. "Chapeau!" as the French would say.

THE GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT OF THE YEAR

Jim Morrison's line, however, is truly the Line—the most beautiful, direct ski descent from Everest. I remember discussing it with Marc Siffredi before his final trip. He told me he was willing to go all the way for that "real line." Tragically, we didn't know it would be our last conversation.



Kope

Slovenia's Best
Kept Secret

**THE LARGEST
NIGHT SKI AREA IN SLOVENIA**



KOPE



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KOPE

Slovenia's best kept secret.

On the westernmost and highest part of Pohorje, above the town of Slovenj Gradec, you can find your own "little paradise". The Kope ski resort, spreaded among spruce forests, is more than just a center for winter sports enthusiasts. The energy that can be felt at an altitude of 1,010 m to 1,542 m, does not leave anyone dissapointed. A sufficient proof of this are the awards that the ski resort has received for many years in a row - in the category of medium-sized ski centers, the title of **BEST SKI CENTER in Slovenia**; and it also got the title of **FAMILY-FRIENDLY SKI RESORT**.

During the winter season, with renovations and investments, it offers 12 km of ski slopes on 80 hectares, connected by 4 four-seater lifts and 3 lifts. The tracks are diverse and suitable for all skiing enthusiasts - from beginners to top skiers. The Kaštivnik FIS course is considered one of the best in Slovenia, and all other slopes offers, among other things, wonderful views of the nearby hills. With the help of artificial snowmaking, skiing is guaranteed for at least 100 days per season.

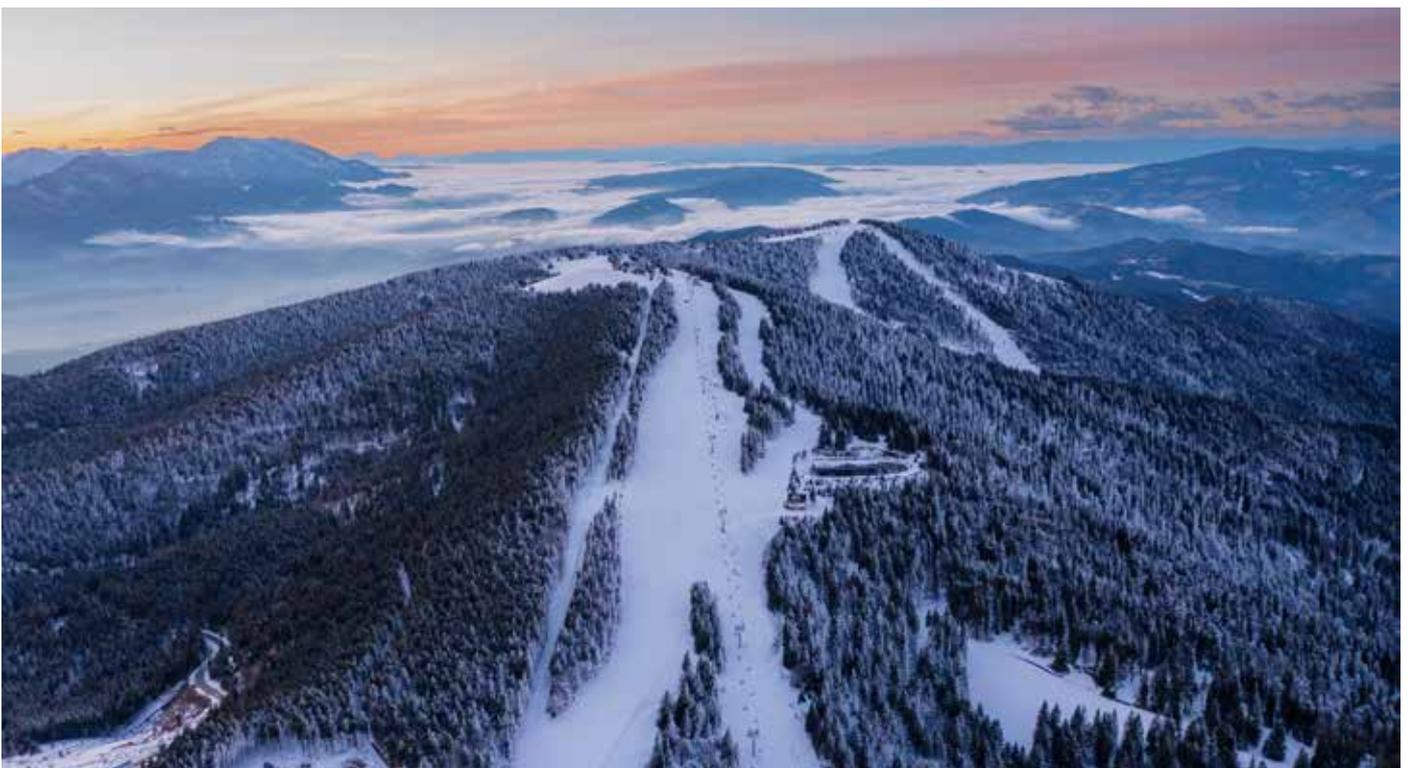


Despite the generally expensive sport, such as skiing, it is possible to spend a full extended weekend or week in Kope with intensive use of the joys of skiing - BOOM WEEKEND. The offer combines a stay at one of the locations with a ski pass that also includes night skiing. We offer accommodation in Grmovškov dom, newly built Hotel Panorama Kope 4* and Apartments Kope. In the immediate vicinity of Grmovškov dom, there are arranged spaces for motorhomes, which can accommodate up to 60 motorhomes and include everything for a comfortable stay.





During summer season, Kope turns into a paradise for sports and nature lovers. Cyclists can find over 380 km of marked trails that wind through beautiful forests and meadows from Kope to Ribniško Pohorje, Rogla and all the way to Maribor. Whether you are a passionate mountain biker or a fan of family outings, Kope will meet your expectations.



SnowPro Demo Team Romania

– Official Statement

We are SnowPro Demo Team Romania, a group driven by a clear and meaningful goal: to bring valuable, accurate, and high-quality information into the world of ski education and instruction.

Our team is made up of passionate instructors from all across the country, united by a shared love for skiing and a strong desire to pass on our knowledge, experience, and values to future generations. We are proud of the community we have built and deeply motivated to contribute to the continuous development of our field.

**Our guiding principle is:
“Do not teach what you cannot ski.”**

This concept highlights a reality that has become increasingly common in the world of ski instruction, both nationally and internationally. In an era dominated by social media and the growing importance of follower numbers, choosing the right instructor based on true competence rather than online presence has become more challenging than ever. Too often, misleading content is promoted by individuals who lack solid professional training, teaching experience, and methodical research.

We believe that media, when used responsibly, is a powerful and positive tool. Our mission is to show clearly what we ask of our students and where we aim to lead them — through correct teaching methods, carefully researched techniques, and proven procedures that deliver real results, while always prioritizing safety.





At present, we are developing a new teaching methodology for our country, striving to share accurate, valuable knowledge through all our projects and appearances. This journey requires time, dedication, consistency, and deep commitment to a shared vision.

We sincerely thank you for the invitation and feel honored to take part in such a meaningful congress — one that promotes essential values, professional growth, and the future of ski education.

With respect,

**Bogdan Nimara – Captain & Coach
Valentin Treistar – Coordinator**



Professional Organization Interski Serbia

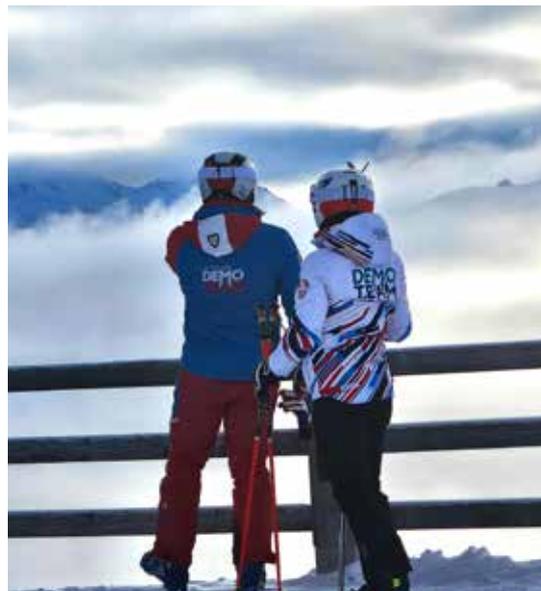
It was established as an expression of the needs and will of all professional instructors in Serbia to unite with the idea of creating better working conditions, training staff, and improving the quality of services for clients.

The purpose of the existence and activities of our organization can be classified into several segments:

- Quality professional training for instructors
- Connecting with international competent instructor associations
- Implementing international criteria, standards, and structures into the practice of professional and other instructors in Serbia
- Transferring and promoting innovations and achievements in the field of education and instructor work to the Ski Association of Serbia, accredited higher education institutions, and other entities involved in skiing and ski training
- Continuous work on improving the working conditions of professional instructors in Serbia.

GOALS

1. Establish Interski International as a recognized competent international body in the field of education and work of all ski instructor denominations within the legal system of Serbia, dealing with this topic.
2. Establish the competence of S.O. Interski Serbia as the authoritative professional organization in the field of education, licensing, and work of professional ski instructors in Serbia.
3. Establish an efficient and high-quality system of relationships among all entities involved in the work of professional ski schools and professional instructors.
4. Establish an effective model of cooperation with the Ski Association of Serbia and other professional organizations with the aim of improving and developing skiing in the widest sense in the Republic of Serbia (recreational, school, professional, competitive, and others).
5. Maximize the improvement of the education system.



VISION

- A regulated system of education, licensing, and work at the national level in cooperation with all relevant legal entities through the alignment of the domestic legal system with international standards wherever applicable and not in conflict with the legal system of the Republic of Serbia.
- Constant, efficient, direct connection and active cooperation with all international ski instructor associations and the umbrella association Interski International.
- Establishment of the most efficient and highest quality system (models) of instructor education in Serbia and beyond. To become a role model in instructor education.





SCIENCE AND RESEARCH CENTRE KOPER

A Hub of Mediterranean Wisdom

The Association of Snow Sport Instructors of North Macedonia-MAISS

Established in 2009, the Association of Snow Sports of Macedonia (MAISS) has been a cornerstone of the SnowSports landscape in Macedonia. Operating in cooperation with Ski Federation of Macedonia and Faculty of Physical Education Sport and Health (Skopje, Macedonia), MAISS shoulders the responsibility of training Alpine and Snowboard Snow Sport instructors.

The past two years have marked significant strides for MAISS. In 2022, MAISS gained membership in the prestigious International Ski Instructors Association (ISIA), swiftly followed by full integration into INTERSKI International the subsequent year (2023). These affiliations have seamlessly woven MAISS into the fabric of the global snow sports community, alongside esteemed organizations like IVSI, IAESS, ISIA, and INTERSKI International.

MAISS remains steadfast in its commitment to local snow sport instructors, offering essential educational programs, facilitating job placements, and fostering international collaboration.

Despite the challenges posed by global warming on winter sports, MAISS consistently provides Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and innovative courses for its members. Since 2019, a total of 201 snow sport instructors have successfully completed education across three levels:

- Level 1: National Stamp
- Level 2: IVSI Stamp
- Level 3: ISIA Stamp

In 2023, MAISS boasted a roster of 54 Alpine Ski and 15 Snowboard instructors, further underscoring its dedication to nurturing talent and excellence in snow sports instruction.



Scan the QR code for the full MAISS Snowsports Instructors Database categorized by seasons

MAISS is a proud member of:



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<https://www.facebook.com/MAISSinstructor>
https://www.instagram.com/maiss_macedonia/

Contacts:
info@maiss.mk
www.maiss.mk



NOVI RAV4



KMALU V SALONIH

DO 10 LET JAMSTVA

Povprečna poraba goriva za vozila Toyota RAV4 Hybrid: od 5,7 do 5,8 l/100 km in emisije CO₂: od 129 do 131 g/km. Emisijska stopnja EURO 6 AP. Emisije NO_x: od 0,0017 g/km do 0,0022 g/km. Ogljikov dioksid (CO₂) je najpomembnejši toplogredni plin, ki povzroča globalno segrevanje. Emisije onesnaževal zunanega zraka iz prometa pomembno prispevajo k poslabšanju kakovosti zunanega zraka. Prispevajo zlasti k čezmerno povišanim koncentracijam prizemnega ozona, delce PM₁₀ in PM_{2,5} ter dušikovih oksidov. 10 letno jamstvo hibridne baterije velja ob rednih testih hibridne baterije (HHC) na 1 leto ali 15.000 prevoženih km (kar nastopi prej) pri pooblaščenih prodajno-servisni Toyotini trgovski mreži. Po preteku tovarniške garancije vam ponujamo brezplačno vključitev v program jamstva Toyota Relax (vse do starosti 10 let ali 200.000 km). Več na www.toyota.si

AVTO CENTER JEREB IZOLA IN KRANJ

DEMOTEAM

SAN MARINO

Welcome to the ancient land of freedom. This phrase greets visitors as they cross the border of the Republic of San Marino. Our territory is very small but has survived the great upheavals of history by clinging to its own values, often at odds with the spirit of the times. In our own small way, as Demo Team, we have tried to honour those values and that history, ever since our first steps on the international scene. With an average age of 28, our demonstrators make up one of the youngest teams present at Interski, ambassadors of new messages adapted to today's world, where ethics and behaviour can meet and embrace teaching and education, with an eye to tourism and social opportunities.



As Demo Team San Marino, since its foundation, we have also taken part in the Isia World Championships (Maribor 2009, Pamporovo 2013, Samnaun 2017), always distinguishing ourselves for the cheerfulness with which we tackled the technical tests, sometimes excelling (Gold Medal in GS in 2017) sometimes studying our defeats to learn from the performances of the best in the world. After the result of the first participation in Maribor, penultimate, hidden in the woods beside the slope to learn from the trainings of the best demo-teams, the exploit was in Pamporovo 2013, where we classified second in the overall ranking. In 2021, at the Isia World Forum, we ranked fourth in all tests, presenting a teaching model aimed at overcoming generational barriers between students and instructors. Can't wait to take part to SPE Balkan SKI 2024 to continue our professional growth!

In St. Anton 2011 we presented a team consisting of 50% women, something that, only 12 years ago, was still generating a stir in the world of skiing. The workshop on the other hand focused on the text **Insegnanti Efficaci** and put the synthesis of propiocity and psychology at the centre of motor learning. 2015 in Ushuaia was the year of 'Teach Different', the method developed in San Marino ski schools to reduce the distance, including physical distance, between teachers and pupils. At that Interski, two of the team's demonstrators were skiers with motor disabilities, proving that integration, through sport, is and can be a fact, not just a rhetorical device. In 2019 in Pamporovo, the topic brought forward by our delegation was that of safety on the slopes, now more than ever a topical issue. At Interski Levi 2023 we introduced in the technical demos **our Natural skiing philosophy**.





BULGARIAN SKI SCHOOL



Mastery Grounded on Tradition, Driven by innovation and Improvement

The Bulgarian Ski School (BSS) is a community of professionals united by an unyielding passion for snow sports. Our mission is to preserve the long-standing traditions of winter sports while simultaneously establishing modern methods and standards.

Tradition and Methodology:

We build upon proven, decades-long practices in education, ensuring a solid foundation and a profound understanding of snow sports and the mountain environment.

Knowledge Sharing:

We believe that the path to excellence lies through sharing of experience.

As an active participant and host of numerous prestigious international forums, we are a key player in the global exchange of knowledge. Our participation in SPE Balkan Ski provides a vital opportunity to share expertise, skills, and best practices. The Bulgarian delegation at the conference represents a strategic synergy between the National Sports Academy (Bulgaria's premier sports university) and the Bulgarian Ski School (the association of ski instructors and schools). This collaboration is a direct result of the refined educational system for snow sports experts in Bulgaria—a partnership between academia and professional practice that yields tangible results on the slopes and in the lecture halls.

We are proud to introduce our revitalized Demo Team. The squad has been renewed not only with younger demonstrators but has also gained a new aesthetic and dynamic edge — 50% of our new members are women. Our involvement in the Balkan conference serves as a grand rehearsal for this rejuvenated team ahead of Interski 2027. Throughout the event, we will present lectures and practical workshops within both the main conference and the “Snow Sports Education in Universities” symposium. Furthermore, our Demo Team will showcase its latest program during the official Demo Show.

Mastery is not a given—it is the result of tireless effort and a commitment to continuous self-improvement. Our participation is made possible through the invaluable support of the National Sports Academy (NSA), Pamporovo, and Diel Sport.

Passion-Driven Excellence: Our goal is not merely to certify, but to inspire. We pass on a passion that transforms the role of a snow sports instructor into a lifelong calling





It all began in 1994 and continues to this day, with the conviction that, to the joy of skiers and snowboarders in Montenegro, it will last for many years to come.

In fact, let us recall that it began much earlier, with the well-known story of Henrik Angel in 1891, when Montenegrins first encountered a skier. As a sign of gratitude, MASI produced a film about the Norwegian captain and adventurer in cooperation with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway, the Montenegrin Olympic Committee and KNB Production. Instead of using additional pages of this publication, we are sharing links to two episodes that confirm one of the longest skiing traditions in Europe and the world.



MASI (MONTENEGRIN ASSOCIATION OF SKI AND SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIkzoolhBLE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOLZUWbmj9A>

Let us return to the more recent past. The visionary of Montenegrin skiing, Mileta "Bleki" Leković, was most responsible for introducing the Association into the most important international ski organizations (ISIA; IAESS; IVSI). Defying the difficult times when the former Yugoslav region was facing uncertainty, he kept pace with Europe and the world. Words are insufficient to describe his contribution in positioning MASI among the elite, and therefore we share a link to a program which, through the ISIA review process, confirmed the quality of his work. The program will also evoke memories of Davorin Karničar, who was then responsible for the ski touring section. Davo is no longer with us, and his premature passing left a profound mark on MASI.

<https://youtu.be/01TyyvEh1W0>

Today, the Montenegrin Association of Ski and Snowboard Instructors and Coaches (MASI) is undergoing a generational transition. The younger team that grew alongside "Uncle Bleki" has been supported by experienced leadership: President Dragoslav Nenezić, Full Professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Podgorica and physician at the Clinical Center of Montenegro, a passionate skier who progressed from the slopes of Brezovica to the Alps; and Vice President Rašid Hadžić, former Dean of the Faculty of Sport in Nikšić, now head of the Skiing Department at the same faculty. Indira Hrapović (demonstrator) represents the Association's connection with the international skiing community, particularly Austria, where in addition to skiing she shares extensive expertise in Pilates. The Head of Professional Programs remains Peter Sitar, while the profession has been further strengthened by Andrea Ugrinoska. Known as the "Flying Woman" by

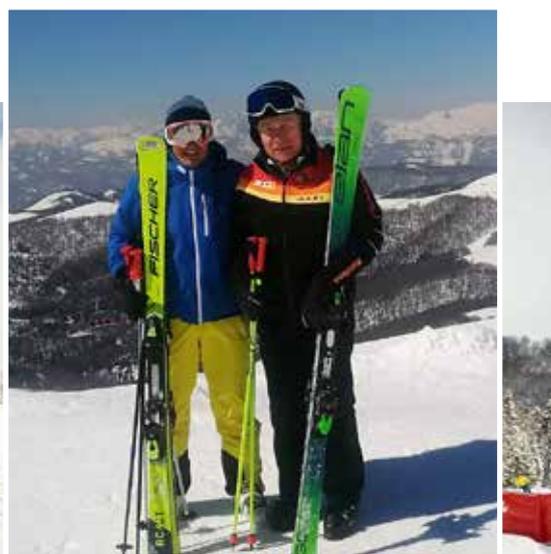
the new generation of snowboard instructors developing under her supervision, she spent 2009 ranked number one on the international FIS list in the slopestyle discipline.

As for the younger leadership team, led by President of the Board Ivan Ivanović, media expert and Ombudsman of the national public broadcaster RTCG (a MASI member since 2003), and Secretary General Milovan Šoškić, civil engineer, time will provide the final assessment. What is already visible, however, is an ambitious beginning: renewed branding (website and logo), a serious and dedicated approach to every member of the Association, preparation of team uniforms, the gradual formation of a sponsorship pool, and the establishment of a new Demo Team for appearances in the United States.

Four seminars have already been successfully conducted, with positive feedback received through digital responses from active members of the Association. The work plan and program for 2026/27 have already been adopted by the Board. Cooperation has been established with "Montenegro Ski Resorts." The new home of



MASI is Ski centre Kolašin 1600, which together with neighbouring Ski centre Kolašin 1450 and the announced developments for the upcoming season, is preparing a major boost in regional skiing. And it gives us hope that in the coming years we will welcome our colleagues from Kranjska Gora to our Bjelasica mountain.



SLOSKI DEMO TEAM

90 Years of Knowledge, Tradition and International Recognition

This year marks the 90th anniversary of organised ski instructor education and professional development in Slovenia. Nine decades of systematic work, intergenerational knowledge transfer and continuous adaptation to developments in equipment, methodology and environmental conditions confirm the stability and quality of our system.



Today, we bring together approximately 3,500 ski instructors and coaches, making us the largest professional sports association in Slovenia. This represents a strong and well-structured professional network that ensures unified standards, high-quality education and long-term development of the profession.

The development of all forms of skiing is overseen by the Slovenian Association of Ski Instructors and Trainers (SITAS). Its role is to advance alpine skiing, snowboarding, freestyle and other disciplines, to design and implement education programmes, to manage the licensing system and to continuously refine teaching methodology.

At the top of this structure stands the SLOSKI DEMO TEAM, operating under the umbrella of the Slovenian Ski Association. The team represents the highest professional level of the Slovenian National Ski School. Its performances are not merely aesthetic displays but structured demonstrations of technical precision, synchronisation and methodological clarity.

The Slovenian National Ski School enjoys recognised international status. It is known for technical excellence, systematic methodology and a strong pedagogical foundation. Its quality is further confirmed by the significant



**Smučarska zveza Slovenije/
Ski Association of Slovenia**

Združenje Učiteljev in Trenerjev
Smučarja Slovenije/
Ski Instructors and Trainers
Association of Slovenia

Podutiška cesta 146,
1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija





number of Slovenian instructors and coaches working in the world's leading ski nations – including Austria, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, the United States and Canada. Their engagement abroad demonstrates the competitiveness and international comparability of Slovenian expertise.

As we celebrate our 90th anniversary, we are already intensively preparing for our presentation at the INTERSKI Congress in Vail in 2027. This congress represents the highest international platform for the exchange of knowledge in ski instruction. In this context, the BALKAN SKI Conference serves as an excellent precursor to INTERSKI, providing a valuable regional platform for professional dialogue, exchange of best practices and alignment of methodological approaches.

International cooperation is not a formality for us; it is a strategic component of collective progress. Through active participation in regional and global forums, we strengthen professional standards, expand our knowledge base and contribute to the ongoing development of ski instruction beyond national borders.

Ninety years of tradition represent both responsibility and commitment to the future. Our strategic focus remains clear: to maintain quality, professional coherence and the international reputation of Slovenian ski instruction in the decades ahead.



dr. Blaž Lešnik

Predsednik in direktor ZUTS Slovenije/
SITAS president and director

Ski Trainers and Instructors Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Snow sports tradition in Bosnia and Herzegovina is related with mountain area round Sarajevo and alpine skiing as major sport. After the Winter Olympic Games 1984 in Sarajevo, the skiing becoming an important and organized sport in our country. Based on those facts ski enthusiasts established the Ski Instructors and Trainers Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ATUS in B&H).

Ski Instructors and Trainers Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only institution in the country of that kind, which is educating and training ski and snowboard instructors. ATUS is a full member of the International Ski Instructors Association (ISIA), the world body for professional ski instructors as well as INTERSKI and IAESS. ATUS in B&H meets all the requirements to train and educate snow sport instructors counting over 900 members. Moreover, the instructor's program of ATUS is also in full compliance with all of ISIA's established norms and standards.

www.atus.ba



Interview with Mr. Eric Sheckleton

President, Interski International



snowboarders was Mike Shaw. He was also a member of our national snowboard team. Sometimes it just works out that way that you are at the right place and the right time. He helped me develop my skills as a snowboarder, teacher and leader and eventually followed his footsteps on the national team, and finally on the national board of PSIA-AASI. That exposed me to many mentors and inspirational leaders. Probably too many to list here, but it would include past and present members of the PSIA-AASI National Team, members of the PSIA-AASI Board and Staff, and friends from my region of PSIA-NRM.

4. How did your early experiences shape your philosophy on ski instruction and athlete development?

Freedom and self-expression are important to me. I try to share that in my lessons by recognizing that every student is unique and has a different way they enjoy the snow and even different areas that concern them when they are performing. Exploring the full spectrum of snowsports and then identifying where the passion lies, is key to developing the skier/rider both physically and emotionally. My goal is to help students find the spark, in whatever way it appears, and then kindle that fire until their own passion takes over and they can tap into it whenever they want.

I. A Life on Snow: Personal History & Foundations

1. Can you take us back to your very first experience on skis/snowboard? What did snow sports mean to you then—and what do they mean now?

I learned to at about 5 years old at ski at a little ski area near my home called Red Lodge in Montana. At that time, it was a small community with many families, so my parents felt comfortable putting me on the bus to go ski on my own or with my friends. For me, skiing meant freedom. I could spend the entire day doing what I wanted anywhere I wanted. Sometimes I would spend all day just skiing through the woods to see what I would find.

2. Was there a defining moment when you realized that skiing/snowboarding would become more than just a passion, but a lifelong mission?

I think it was probably when I learned to snowboard in 1986. I was one of only a few snowboarders in Red Lodge and the skiing public looked at us as outcasts. That is when I knew that I had to show that it didn't matter what you chose to wear on your feet, as long as you were having fun in the snow.

3. Who were the mentors, coaches, or innovators that most influenced your development in snow sports?

I was lucky that I first applied to be a snowboard instructor at Big Mountain in Whitefish, MT. The person in charge of hiring and training of





5. Looking back, what do you consider the most important lesson skiing has taught you about leadership?

Patience and to come at problems from a variety of angles. One solution doesn't work in every situation or for each person. Sometimes you have to be creative and try it again in a different way. But you must always stay patient and view it as just part of the process.

II. Shaping the Evolution of Snow Sports

6. Over the decades, how have you seen snow sports evolve—technically, culturally, and educationally?

I have seen snowsports become more inclusive in many ways, but also less inclusive in others. There are many different ways to enjoy the snow now, from skiing and snowboarding to snow skates and snow bikes. There is also a lot of improvement on the adaptive front, thanks to all of the creative leaders in that space. However, at least in the USA, it is becoming more and more expensive, exclusive and difficult for the average person to enjoy. Especially for marginalized communities. Transportation to resorts from metro areas is expensive and difficult. The sport is still largely dominated by male leaders and the messaging is often not inviting for people who have never tried the sport. Instructors can play a huge role in bridging the gap and making our sport more welcoming and inviting.

7. What role has Interski played in unifying different national approaches to ski instruction and training?

Interski has played a huge role in the sharing of information and building opportunities for collaboration in order to elevate all national systems so instruction overall can improve. Historically, this

has happened every four years at the Interski Congress. That continues to be the most important opportunity for sharing, networking and improving. However, Interski International is building many other resources and opportunities to share in real time, so we don't have to wait four years to come together. This includes online forums, social media interactions, a continuously growing YouTube channel, a robust website with the IAESS Education Hub, and the very engaging IAESS webinar series. Interski provides the opportunities for instructors to learn and grow at any time.

8. Are there any innovations in teaching methodology that you believe truly changed the sport?

I won't say which nation brought the idea, but I believe student-centered learning was a massive shift in the way national education systems approached teaching snowsports. The idea that you would not follow a strict pathway for learning, but adjust your approach to better fit the individual learner, was a full shift in the way many nations thought about teaching. That concept has taken over and I believe we are more successful at developing lifelong skiers and snowboarders because of it.

9. How do you balance tradition in skiing with the need for constant modernization?

This is a good question and I must admit that it was initially a challenge for me when I was first elected to the Interski Presidium. I began snowboarding at age 17 and have always been one to challenge the status quo. I did that as a member of the PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team, a member of the PSIA-AASI Board, and even in my own personal and business life. It took me a few years on the Interski Presidium before I learned to respect and appreciate the history and tradition of our organization and the sport. I now believe we must preserve this history better than we have in the past, which is why I appreciate the efforts Petar Iankov is making to capture all of the Interski history and digitize it. However, everything must evolve and grow. Snowboarding did that for skiing in the 1990's. Shaped skis and freestyle did it for the entire sport in the 2000's. Without creativity and innovation, our sport will fail to attract and retain a new era of enthusiasts.

10. What challenges have instructors and federations faced globally, and how has Interski helped address them?

I think the big one is the environment. It would be hard to argue that the natural environment is not changing. Winters are warmer and shorter. Resorts across the globe are closing because they don't hold the natural snow as long. Plastics are found in the mountains and waterways. Interski, along with ISIA and IAESS, has partnered with the United Nations-BRS to begin work on an online course to educate instructors on the environmental challenges facing mountain communities and how they can better engage and educate guests on their impact and how they can change behaviors in a positive way. Instructors are leaders on the snow and their example matters. Every instructor should be an ambassador for the climate and help our guests understand their impact on the environment.

III. Interski International: Vision & Responsibility

11. As President of Interski International, how would you describe the organization's core mission today?

To help represent, protect and grow snowsports by providing a variety of resources, programs and platforms that bring national snowsports organizations and individual instructors together to learn, network and elevate each other.

12. What does global cooperation in ski education really look like behind the scenes?

It can be magical and inspiring when educators get together to discuss the sport and how to best teach it. Passion flows deep in the veins of snowsports instructors. There is absolutely a lot of work behind the scenes to develop and facilitate the platforms for engagement, especially the Interski Congress. It can be heated and challenging at times, but this leads to a better outcome when we all focus on the same goal.

13. How do you ensure that both large, well-funded ski nations and smaller developing ski countries have a voice within Interski?

Our forums, webinars and programs are open for all and they are free. So, it really doesn't matter who you represent or where you teach. All are welcome and all member organizations have an equal voice and opportunity in the development of the future. Personally, I try to connect with each nation at least once per year as well. It helps me to understand the needs and maintain connections with my peers around the globe.

14. What leadership principles guide you when representing such a diverse international community?

First, leaders are there to serve, not to be served. Recognizing this helps guide all other decisions and actions. All voices have a right to be heard in a productive and open way. It is always best when the organization is transparent and the goals are public. It may not please everyone, but at least everyone can understand why decisions are made and respect the process.



15. In what ways has the role of Interski changed since its founding?

I would refer back to my comments about the variety of forums and programs we offer now. We are no longer just an event every four years. Member nations asked for a body to represent them and bring them together to help grow the sports and community. Interski responded. Also, I think Interski has become more approachable. Much of this is thanks to technology and the ability to communicate at any moment, rather than waiting for a piece of paper mail to go out. But it also comes from viewing the organization as one in service to the members, and not the other way around. The member nations are driving Interski.

IV. The Upcoming Interski Congress in Vail, USA

16. The next Interski Congress in Vail is highly anticipated—what makes this edition particularly special?

First of all, Interski hasn't been in the USA since it was in Aspen in 1968, so it is very special for the USA to host it again. The themes of Interski have been building towards this with Future... in Bulgaria, where we explored new ideas for customizing lessons and focusing on people skills. Then it was The Guest Experience is Everything in Finland, where we focused in on the impacts to the guest experience and how we can better define great learning environments. Now it is time to go ALL IN with Innovation, Inclusion and Inspiration in the USA. PSIA-AASI has been developing these themes for years, and the entire Team USA is excited to share with the world. More importantly, PSIA-AASI is working with Interski, Vail Resort and the Town of Vail to create a new format that allows more time for nations and national team venues to inspire each other and really dive deeply into innovations and ways to include more people in the sports we love.

17. Why was Vail chosen as the host destination, and what does it symbolize for global skiing?

Vail Mountain is massive and the Town of Vail is known around the world for creating experiences that last a lifetime. The PSIA-AASI team has developed a reputation for bringing new ideas to Interski. The combination of the creative approach to the schedule, new ideas for content, a mountain that allows for freedom and deep exploration of ideas, and a town with a relentless focus on the guest experience, will ensure an Interski Congress that will be one not to be missed.

18. What key themes or topics will define the Vail Congress?

ALL IN. INCLUDE-Snowsports is for everyone. Our future is inclusion and we must create learning opportunities for everyone. We all belong to this community and we are excited to share that passion together again. INNOVATE-Interski and the Interski members are continually adapting and striving to be better. From pushing technology to enhancing learning methodology, we are focused on creating a sustainable lifestyle for all snowsports enthusiasts. INSPIRE-the relationships built through sharing and learning are transformational and life changing. We will be sharing the joy of snowsports together in Vail 2027.

19. How will the Congress address current challenges such as climate change, sustainability, and resort development?

As I mentioned previously, Interski is working with the United Nations-BRS to develop an environmental sustainability education program for instructors. We hope to roll this out for the event. We are also partnering with the Town of Vail and their amazing sustainability council, to involve new sustainability efforts during the event. A real stretch goal for me is to try and work with an organization to track the actual environmental impact of the event, including the travel by participants. If we can do this, then we can have a baseline for innovation and improvement in the future.

20. What can instructors, federations, and industry leaders expect to take home from Vail—both practically and philosophically?

Interski does not develop the content. The member nations, organizations and individuals create and share the content. So, it is critical that everyone come with an open mind and a willingness to engage fully. There is no limit to what someone can take home from Interski. The only limit is how much participate and immerse yourself in the experience.

V. European Skiing: Heritage Meets Innovation

21. Europe has long been the historical heart of alpine skiing—how do you see its role today in the global ski landscape?

I think it still is the heart of alpine skiing. It is a way of life, and the profession of ski teaching is as respected and recognized as anywhere else in the world. That focus on professionalism and the level of skiing is critical to driving Interski and the world.

22. What lessons can emerging ski nations learn from Europe's deep instructional traditions?

A clear structure and system is critical for consistent growth and recognition of the snowsports instructor. The European nations have developed time-tested systems and structures that are proven to develop top-notch skiers and instructors.

23. How are European ski schools adapting to new generations of skiers and changing learning styles?

It all begins by understanding that every student is unique and success comes from matching the teaching approach to the student. Schools are recognizing this by becoming more flexible in their programs and approaches so that more students participate and succeed.

24. Do you see differences in how European and non-European countries approach ski education—and can those differences be strengths?

I may be wrong, but I believe that many of the non-European countries learned many of the systems and approaches from European countries and then began exploring more creative approaches to adapting the systems and approaches to fit the learner. Those non-European countries have been driving this creative approach and focus on the student and pushing the world to adapt. Creativity still requires a base structure to follow, and a structure is more effective if it allows for some creativity and customization. It is the combination that makes for a truly magical experience for guests.

VI. Focus on the Balkans & Regional Cooperation

25. The Balkan ski region has shown growing energy and ambition—what stands out to you about its development?

I definitely do not know enough about the development of this region from an historical perspective. However, in my limited experience, the Balkan ski region has





shown a tremendous commitment to collaboration and exploration. The Balkan Ski Conference is a great example, but there are many examples of conferences, seminars and projects that bring the region together in a spirit of growth for all.

26. How important are regional initiatives like the Balkan Ski Conference for the future of snow sports?

Skiing and snowboarding are social sports. Educators are inherently social people. There is always some magic when snowsports instructors get together to share ideas. Everyone comes away from that with a different outlook and something to apply to lessons.



The Balkin Ski Conference provides that kind of interaction and forum, but with elevated scientific content. The ideas that are developed during this conference are innovative and impactful. Regional conferences are wonderful venues for like-minded, passionate individuals to create lasting friendships anchored in the love of snowsports and sharing it with others.

27. What opportunities do you see for stronger collaboration between Balkan countries and the wider European ski community?

The opportunities are limitless and Interski is the perfect vehicle for making those connections within the community of snowsports instructors.

28. How can Interski support smaller or emerging regions in gaining international recognition and influence?

It goes back to getting out of it what you put into it. Interski exists to support all nations, largely by providing a host of platforms, both digital and in-person. We also partner with stakeholders to address issues common to snowsports, like our environmental work with the UN-BRS. Emerging regions need only get involved with Interski in an active way. Host a webinar, shoot a burst for InterskiTV, hold a regional event, and provide compelling content during an Interski Congress. Those avenues for recognition and influence are there for those that are proactive and get involved.

VII. Looking Ahead: The Future of Snow Sports

29. What do you believe will define the next decade of snow sports globally?

I believe there will be some difficult changes and some positive ones. I think there will be a further divide between the “Haves” and the “Have Nots”, both economically and environmentally. Many resorts will continue to target the higher dollar guest, alienating those for which the cost matters. Resorts in lower elevations or with southern exposure, will struggle to hold snow and stay open a full season. However, studies seem to suggest that guests are becoming more focused the experiences they can have while traveling. They will stay in a less fancy hotel but pay more money for a private lesson or unique experience. This creates a big opportunity if resorts recognize the strength of instructors in creating those experiences and turning that passion into repeat visits and dedicated guests.

30. How should ski instructors and federations prepare for a future shaped by technology, climate concerns, and changing lifestyles?

Focus on the guest and personalize as much as possible. Educate the guests about technology, lifestyles and definitely the climate. Help turn guests into agents of positive change. Imagine the potential if just a fraction of our guests changed their behavior in a positive way, thanks to a conversation with their ski or snowboard instructor.

31. If you could leave one message to the next generation of ski professionals, what would it be?

I think it would be the theme of Interski 2027. Innovate, Include, and Inspire. I would tell them to continually innovate to improve your fun and your impact. Demand that the sport become more inclusive as the love of snowsports should be shared with all. And find ways to be inspired regularly so you can be that inspiration for another person.

32. Finally, when you imagine the future of skiing, what gives you the most optimism?

My daughter Liberty, is a new full-time ski instructor at Big Sky Resort, fresh out of university at age 24. She calls me every day to share the exciting breakthrough she had with her student or the smile she saw on their faces, or the new teaching idea that worked. She is so passionate about skiing, and even more passionate about sharing the joy of the snow. I feel optimistic every day because I know there are thousands of instructors like her, who are sharing the love of our sport and connecting with all types of students all over the world. As long as that passion is being handed down, then skiing will remain alive and well far into the future.

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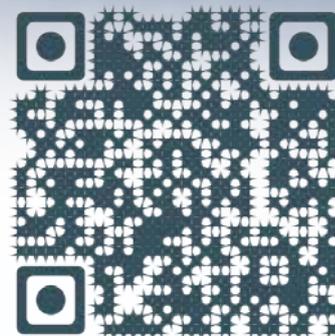
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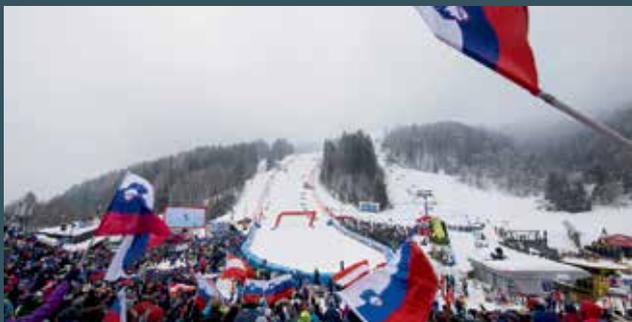
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Athlete: Thomas Dressen



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SKI TOURING in HOKKAIDO: **Powder, Volcanoes, and Onsen Between Furano and Niseko**

Japan's northernmost island, Hokkaido, has in recent years become synonymous with some of the finest powder snow on Earth. Cold air masses from Siberia sweep across the Sea of Japan, gather moisture, and release astonishing amounts of dry snow over the island's mountainous interior. The regions around Furano and Niseko are best known for their ski resorts, but the true experience begins where the groomed runs end—out in the world of ski touring, among birch forests, volcanic cones, and the steam of natural hot springs.

Unmatched Powder

Hokkaido is famous for so-called “Japow”—exceptionally dry, light snow that allows for floating turns even on steeper terrain. Snowfall is frequent and abundant; several dozen centimeters can fall overnight. For ski tourers, this means nearly limitless possibilities: soft lines through forests, open alpine slopes below the peaks, and wide volcanic craters that, in good visibility, transform into white amphitheatres.

The area around Furano offers more relaxed, scenic tours, while the terrain near Niseko is more rugged and distinctly volcanic. Snow-covered cones rise above the landscape, offering views of the sea and distant mountain ranges on clear days.

The peaks are of volcanic origin. Near Furano, renowned ski touring terrain includes Mount Tokachi in the Daisetsuzan National Park—still considered active—as well as Mount Raiden. All serve as natural playgrounds for deep powder skiing, offering epic descents on unmarked slopes and through deep forest lines.

Mount Yōtei and Mount Zōto – Volcanic Classics

One of the most iconic peaks is Mount Yōtei, often called “Ezo Fuji” due to its symmetrical shape. The ascent is a classic ski tour: a long, steady approach through forest, followed by open slopes where the wind sculpts waves into the snow. From the summit, there is the option of descending into a vast caldera—an enormous volcanic crater that, in stable conditions, offers unforgettable skiing on untouched powder. Dropping into the caldera feels like skiing into a snow cathedral, surrounded by white walls.

Near Niseko lies the lesser-known yet highly regarded Mount Zōto. It offers slightly more technical lines and a wilder setting. Thanks to the abundance of



The Dangers of Japan's Mountains

Despite its fairytale appearance, Hokkaido is far from harmless. Massive snowfall also means increased avalanche danger. The snowpack is often several meters deep, and layers change rapidly due to frequent storms. Wind creates slabs on exposed ridges, while tree wells, creeks, and sudden gullies pose hidden hazards in forested terrain.

Rapidly changing weather adds to the risk. Fog, strong winds, and snowstorms can erase tracks and orientation within minutes. Due to the remoteness

snow, conditions are often ideal for steep forest sections, where soft turns flow between sparse birch trees. A descent into the volcanic basin is also possible here, but it requires solid avalanche assessment skills and strong navigation abilities, as fog is common in Hokkaido.

Onsen – The Perfect End to the Day

After a long day in deep snow, nothing compares to soaking in an onsen. These natural hot springs, heated by geothermal energy, are an essential part of Japanese culture and nearly mandatory after a day of ski touring in Hokkaido. Bathing is a ritual that requires careful adherence to etiquette. Washing thoroughly before entering the hot pools is a precise and mindful process.

Around Niseko and Furano, several traditional bathhouses offer magical settings, with steam rising from hot water while snow falls quietly around you. The combination of cold air, tired legs, and hot mineral water ensures complete regeneration.

Sapporo Snow Festival – A Winter Spectacle

If you combine your trip with a visit to the island's capital, Sapporo, you can experience another winter highlight: the Sapporo Snow Festival. Each year, the festival attracts millions of visitors who admire enormous snow and ice sculptures. After days in the mountains, an evening stroll among illuminated sculptures offers a striking contrast to the wilderness experienced on touring skis.





of some tours, rescue operations can be challenging. Full avalanche equipment (beacon, probe, shovel), the knowledge to use it, and conservative route choices are essential. Hiring local guides is highly recommended, as they understand the unique characteristics of Japanese snow.

Hokkaido Cuisine – Fuel for Powder Days

Hokkaido boasts one of Japan's finest culinary traditions. After a tour, a bowl of hot ramen is especially satisfying—particularly Sapporo ramen, with its rich miso base, corn, and butter—a surprisingly perfect combination.

The island is also known for its fresh seafood: crab, scallops, and sea urchin are standout delicacies. A regional specialty is soup curry, an aromatic broth with chicken and vegetables that warms you to the core. In traditional izakaya restaurants, guests sit at low tables, sharing small plates along with local beer or sake.

Along the coast, kaisendon—a bowl of rice topped with assorted raw seafood—is a favorite. Hokkaido is also renowned for high-quality dairy products, so it's no surprise that its ice cream and cheeses rank among the best in Japan.

Transport and Logistics

Access to Hokkaido is easiest by flying into New Chitose Airport near Sapporo. From there, train connections run to Furano and Niseko, though renting a car is the most practical option for ski touring. Roads are well maintained but snow-covered; winter tires are standard.





Japanese traffic is exceptionally orderly, and driving is on the left-hand side. Parking at trailheads is usually permitted, though checking local regulations is advisable.

Wilderness That Rewards Respect

Ski touring in Hokkaido combines raw nature, cultural uniqueness, and world-class skiing. From ascents of volcanic peaks like Mount Yōtei and Mount Zōto to floating descents into calderas and relaxation in onsen, the experience transcends a typical ski holiday. Yet the exceptional snow conditions demand deep respect for the mountains and thoughtful decision-making.

Hokkaido rewards the brave and the prepared—those who listen to the snow, the wind, and the silence of snow-covered birch forests—with unforgettable turns in the lightest powder on Earth.



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INTERVIEW

with Borut Fakin, MSc, Director of Vinakoper

The winery has a long tradition in Slovenian viticulture. How do you understand its mission today – merely as a wine producer, or also as a partner to the region and community?

Vinakoper has always been closely connected with Istria – with its people, nature, and the environment on which we depend. We are not only part of the region; the region is our inspiration. Its landscape, culture, and also that well-known Istrian stubbornness drive us forward when times are tough. When many would give up, we prefer to seek new paths and solutions.

You can feel this every day. In the cellar, we see it in the eyes of our employees and hear it in the words of new colleagues who choose Vinakoper partly because we have a reputation as a good and caring employer. Entire families work here, and knowledge and experience are passed down from generation to generation. In this way, we preserve valuable vineyard skills and connect them with modern approaches, technology, and creativity.

We can proudly say that our wines reflect the love and efforts of our entire team, who believe in our story, who enjoy achieving our business goals, and who understand how we can inspire and co-create the development of the entire region. And when our wine delights someone or brings people together at the same table, we know we are doing something good for the wider community as well.

Slovenian Istria has outstanding natural conditions for viticulture. In your opinion, what is its greatest potential, and how can wine contribute to the region's recognition as a gastronomic destination?

Wine and food always go hand in hand. Food and drink are part of our memories. Just think: skiing in Austria – we immediately think of Germknödel. An evening by the sea – grilled fish. And alongside it? A fresh, playful, perfectly chilled Malvasia.

Wine carries the character of its place. Here, the bora wind from the sea brings minerals to the vineyards, influencing the grapes and ultimately becoming noticeable in the glass. That is why wine is not just a beverage but part of the destination's identity.

We like to say that gastronomy is what we take home from a holiday – sometimes in memory, sometimes literally in the trunk of our car. That is why at Vinakoper we developed a rich gift programme, available in our Wine Boutique in Koper, in our online shop, and in our other stores. We develop it in cooperation with local providers of various gastronomic delicacies. Last year we also opened the KeBon gastro lab, our space for team-building and cooking courses open to the public. It has become a true hub of Istrian gastronomy, and visitors' responses confirm that the region has enormous potential in this field.

The winery owns its vineyards but also cooperates with local growers. How important is this collaboration for you?

It seems to be one of the key aspects of your work. Extremely important. Just like in sports, every link in the chain counts. We believe we are stronger when we combine knowledge, experience, and the desire for progress.



Our doors are always open to new ideas, projects, and partnerships that bring benefits to the entire community. Sustainability is a key part of this story. We constantly look for zero-waste solutions. For example, our SPA line was created by using grape seeds from the production process for cosmetic products such as shower gels and creams, developed in cooperation with local partners. The same applies to special projects such as the Altroke by Vinakoper Easter egg or the Esenca Istre panettone, both available only for a limited period. These exclusive seasonal products reflect local tradition while pushing our wine production beyond its usual boundaries. Over the years, we have developed, for example, a Yellow Muscat spray essence, a Refošk gel, and rosé caviar pearls.

There are also projects such as the musical wine Sara, where we tested how music affects wine during barrel ageing, and the Otohogi project, through which we send our Capo d'Istria 1072 to distant Japan, where during maturation it is exposed to spiritual music created by a selected Japanese spiritual figure and intended for wedding celebrations. I should also mention our charity wine and the joint St. Martin's celebration with local producers, which nicely show how much we value the willingness to connect the entire Istrian wine sector in meaningful stories that move the whole region forward.

Such products and projects reflect our innovation and creativity and, I believe, are also a source of pride for all our employees.

In recent years, the style of your wines has also evolved. Which varieties best express the character of Slovenian Istria, and how are you developing them for broader recognition?

Today all our wines have a youthful, modern identity, both in appearance and taste. In recent years we have invested intensively in renewing all our lines and have focused our portfolio primarily on bottled wines. Our flagships, of course, are the indigenous Refošk and Malvasia, symbols of Slovenian Istria.

Numerous awards prove that we have brought both varieties to development levels that exceed past expectations. Among them, the one that still resonates most strongly in the hearts of the entire region – and I believe also of Slovenia – is last year's exceptional success at the world's largest international wine competition, Decanter, where our Yellow Muscat received "Best in Show," placing it among the top 50 wines in the world, the highest honour one can achieve in international competitions.

Not long ago, French experts in sparkling wines and champagne convinced Istrian winegrowers that Refošk was not suitable for sparkling wines. Well, with a bit of stubbornness, and above all knowledge and new technological approaches, we have shown that an excellent (sweet) sparkling Refošk can be made, as demonstrated by our Capris sweet Refošk. The versatility of this indigenous variety is evident from our products and even convinced demanding French oenologists years ago. After visiting our cellar, a renowned oenologist proposed that Refošk be included among the permitted varieties in the Bordeaux

region. The reason? Its low pH and fresh acidity help solve many problems associated with climate change – which we know is today the greatest concern of winegrowers worldwide.

The uniqueness of our indigenous varieties is also proven by the enthusiasm and popularity we encounter when crossing truly distant borders. We have received excellent responses in Ghana, where we have two showrooms, as well as in Vietnam and the aforementioned Japan. Most importantly, wherever we go, we act as ambassadors of Istria, bringing not only the shimmering wines in the glass but our entire identity and the attractive destination on the sunny side of the Alps.

Modern winemaking requires constant adaptation. How do you balance tradition and innovation for long-term development?

You cannot rely only on hitting the jackpot; sometimes you must play wisely even with smaller wins. As mentioned, creativity and innovation are among our core values. Not because they are fashionable buzzwords, but because they nurture in the winery the desire for development, progress, self-expression, and the fresh, attractive presentation of Istrian heritage, while helping us survive and grow even in challenging times. Climate change is a reality – the weather is like a lottery every year; we hope for the jackpot, but we must know how to play well even with three or four numbers.

We have learned that in every situation we must look for new opportunities, do so through partnerships and collaborations, and always be guided by the desire to create opportunities for the entire community and region. Tradition gives us solid foundations, while innovation gives us the wings to move forward.

Winemaking goes beyond just producing wine. How does the winery contribute to tourism development, the local economy, and the recognition of Slovenian Istria?

I believe it is essential to view the region as a whole. All of us are part of its every breath. That is why we support many local and national sports clubs, engage in culture, and seek synergies with tourism organisations and municipalities.

For more than a quarter of a century, we have concluded each year with a charity auction of barrique barrels, with the proceeds dedicated from the very beginning to the Paediatric Department of the General Hospital Izola. Over the years, we have donated more than €800,000.

We are aware of where we can motivate, contribute to improving society through initiatives, and where we can connect and encourage joint performances for the benefit of the region and beyond.

Looking ahead, how would you like the winery and coastal viticulture to look in ten or twenty years?

I would like Slovenian Istria to be even more recognizable on the global map. At home, I wish for it to be connected, confident, and united for the benefit of the community – carried by authentic, unique gastronomic products that will attract domestic and foreign guests who know how to enjoy, observe, and appreciate all the treasures of Istria.

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INTERVIEW

JURE KOŠIR

Jure - a personal perspective today

Jure, when you look back on your career today, what comes to mind first – pride, nostalgia, or something else?

A bit of everything. Above all, I'm happy that I managed to achieve good results in skiing that I only dreamed of as a teenager.

How would you introduce yourself to the readers of Balkan Ski Magazine today, without skis and a start number?

Today I'm a veteran almost 54 years old, but still a big sports enthusiast. Of course, I no longer compete, but I'm a passionate recreational athlete. Otherwise, I'm involved in business, mostly connected with sport.

What does skiing mean to you today compared to the time of your active career?

My involvement in skiing is, of course, completely different today. I still really love skiing. A lot of it is related to business obligations, but I also often go on snow alone, with my family, or with friends. Skiing still represents a very important part of my life.

Beginnings and the path to elite sport

How do you remember your first steps in skiing? When did you feel it could become something serious?

I took my first steps with my father, who taught me how to ski. I also skied a lot with my uncle. I loved skiing very much. Around the age of eight, I joined ASK Kranjska Gora and started training in the club. I felt it could become serious after my first successes in the junior categories.

Who had the greatest influence on your early sports path – family, coaches, idols?

Definitely family, first and foremost. I was also lucky to get an excellent coach already in the children's categories.



As a young competitor, did you ever doubt whether skiing was the right path, or were you fully convinced from the start?

No, I never had that feeling. I simply loved skiing.

How demanding was it at that time to balance school, training, and competitions?

In elementary school there were no problems and I was practically an excellent student all the time, but in high school it became much more difficult. It requires effort and good organization.

World Cup career

You competed in one of the strongest generations of alpine skiing. How did you experience the competition?

From the mid-1990s until around 2003, we really had an exceptionally strong team, especially in slalom, and we were constantly among the top three teams in the World Cup. We perceived the competition as opponents that needed to be beaten in races.

Which race or season has remained most vividly in your memory – and why?

I would say my best season was in 1995, which I finished as the second giant slalom skier of the season, third in slalom, and also third overall in the World Cup standings. The 1999 season was also excellent, when I won the slaloms in Kranjska Gora and Kitzbühel.

How did you prepare mentally for the biggest races, where hundredths of a second decide?

Over the years, as an athlete, you develop a preparation routine for competitions. You know what suits you, how you need to warm up and focus for the performance.

What was more difficult: physical preparation or mental pressure?

I would say physical preparation. Long months of training, both conditioning and on snow. You get used to mental pressure with experience.

How did you deal with defeats and moments when results were not what you wanted?

Of course, there are many such moments on every sports path. The most important thing is that failure doesn't crush you too much, that



you learn something from it, and that you return to work with enthusiasm. The team around you is also very important in such moments.

Victories, falls, and injuries

Every elite athlete also faces injuries. How did they affect your career and mindset?

Injuries are inevitable in sport, especially in alpine skiing. Fortunately, I only had two serious injuries. Focus and discipline during rehabilitation are very important.

Were you ever afraid that you wouldn't return to the highest level after an injury?

In 2003 I had knee surgery, and the pain persisted for a very long time. In fact, after that injury, I never skied at the same level as before.

What motivated you again and again to keep going?

I simply loved skiing and believed that I could still achieve good results.

Slovenian skiing and the Balkans

How do you assess the development of Slovenian alpine skiing from your time to today?

Skiing is constantly developing, mostly due to the development of equipment. A lot has changed since the 1990s, especially with the introduction of carving technique in the early 2000s. I needed a lot of training to change my technique, but I'm proud that I also managed to reach the podium with short skis.

What do you think Slovenia does well – and where does it still lag behind the biggest nations?

At the moment, Slovenian competitive skiing is facing many problems. I would say that, in general, it's not doing well. In my opinion, the system of developing young competitors would need to be completely changed.

How do you view skiing in the wider Balkan region? Do you see potential for greater recognition?

The popularity of amateur/recreational skiing in the region is growing. At foreign ski resorts, I see a lot of skiers, also from Balkan countries.

Could the Balkans become a stronger player in world alpine skiing?



I think there are possibilities for that. Not in the form of strong national teams, but rather through private projects, which we already see today.

Life after the end of a career

The transition from active athlete to "civilian" life is difficult for many. How did you experience it?

Fortunately, I immediately started intensively engaging in other activities, mostly related to sport. It was neither very hard nor easy. You have to consciously accept that one story is over and that another one is beginning.

What represents the biggest challenge for you today – and what the greatest satisfaction?

My biggest challenge today is my children, who are almost grown up. I try to help them on their paths and with their decisions. My satisfactions are travel, sport, and summer months by the sea.

How do you stay connected with skiing today?

I am a co-owner of a Swiss marketing agency that represents several athletes. I collaborate with the Italian companies Nordica and Colmar. I am also an expert commentator for women's alpine skiing on RTV SLO.

Do you ever feel that you miss the adrenaline of competitions?

Not really – over the years it has faded. What I do miss is the lifestyle of a professional athlete and the team.

Looking to the future

What future do you predict for alpine skiing in times of climate change?



I think we will manage to adapt to the challenges and changes. Artificial snowmaking equipment is constantly advancing. Skiing will not simply disappear.

How do you think the role of athletes is changing in modern media and social networks?

It is certainly an area that athletes today have to deal with. It's not always easy, especially during failures and harsh criticism online. I think athletes must establish a barrier regarding how much influence media and social networks have on them.

What should young skiers today understand, but often don't?

They must understand the importance of discipline and hard work. A huge amount of training. Talent alone does not guarantee success.

Advice for the young and personal messages

What advice would you give to young competitors who dream of the World Cup?

It's right that they dream. But they must be aware that the path there is long and demanding, full of failures. Persistence and hard work are crucial.

If you could tell your younger self one thing, what would it be?

Even more training – and smarter training.

What has skiing taught you about life in general?

Persistence, discipline, and to some extent, resilience to negative influences.

Conclusion

What does success mean to you today?

Today, of course, I look at success with completely different eyes. It can be small victories in everyday life, small satisfactions.

How would you like the skiing public to remember you?

I think everyone must form their own opinion about an individual athlete and their achievements. I truly don't think about how I should be remembered.

And finally – what currently brings you the most joy in life?

I still love sport, travel, and spending time with family and friends.



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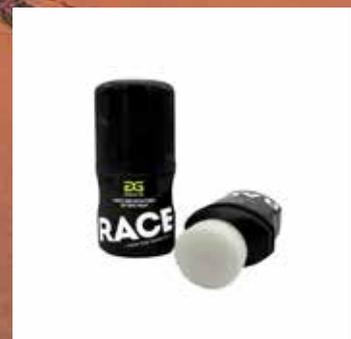
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DIEL, a Bulgarian manufacturer with over 30 years of experience, continues to reinforce its position as a trusted producer of premium sports and winter apparel for professional athletes and dedicated outdoor enthusiasts.



Operating from a fully modernized production facility equipped with advanced manufacturing technology, DIEL integrates cutting-edge sublimation printing, precision cutting, and high-performance sewing techniques. This enables the company to produce durable, high-performance garments engineered to withstand extreme winter conditions, intensive training sessions, and demanding use on ski slopes — without compromising comfort or style.

A key competitive advantage for DIEL is its **full customization capability**. The company offers more than **101 custom sizes**, ensuring an optimal fit for every individual team member.



With a wide spectrum of color options and virtually unlimited design possibilities, DIEL can reproduce any visual identity, sponsor branding, or creative concept with precision. This flexibility allows professional sports teams, corporate partners, and private clients to receive apparel that fully reflects their performance needs and brand vision.

Through continuous investment in technology, skilled craftsmanship, and strict quality control, DIEL remains committed to innovation and excellence. The company continues to expand its presence across both local and international markets while setting new standards in sportswear manufacturing.



For more information, please contact:
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North Macedonia EXPERIENCES ON THE BORDER RIDGE TRAIL

The High Scardus Trail runs for more than 300 kilometers along the border between North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania. The route, which won an international tourism award in 2022, sparked our curiosity. Could it also inspire mountain bikers? With that question in mind, we set off on our bikes to explore the wild, untamed landscapes of the Balkans.

When I began researching, I soon found myself facing a puzzle. I discovered very little information about the nature of the trail. It wasn't even clear whether the route was suitable for mountain biking at all. Yet it was precisely this uncertainty that awakened my spirit of exploration: could this be a hidden biking adventure? An undiscovered dream destination for mountain bikers?

Then, while traveling in Slovenia, I unexpectedly found some answers. During dinner at Ecohotel Koroš, part of the Jamnica Trail Park, I enthusiastically told friends about my idea of riding the High Scardus Trail. Suddenly, a gentleman with a friendly smile approached our table: "Were you talking about the High Scardus Trail? I'm Stojan, I'm from Macedonia, and I build trails there." Incredible!

Stojan, a passionate mountain biker and owner of Outdoor Adventure Macedonia, immediately offered to help turn the idea into reality. Although he knew certain sections of the trail, he believed that no one had likely ridden it in its entirety. His enthusiasm matched my own, so he began sketching out a rough plan while I searched for companions back home. With Swiss photographer Madlaina Walther and Austrian unicycling and biking expert Gerald Rosenkranz, our international team of four was complete. Our exploration of North Macedonia could begin!

Since 2019, the country has officially been called the Republic of North Macedonia. It was established in 1991 under the name Republic of Macedonia after the breakup of Yugoslavia. A long-standing naming dispute with its southern neighbor Greece eventually led to the change. Nevertheless, locals still mostly refer to their country simply as Macedonia. This landlocked Balkan country has only 82 inhabitants per square kilometer—by comparison, Germany has 238.

That leaves plenty of space for adventures off the beaten track. Of the country's just over two million inhabitants, more than 500,000 live in the capital, Skopje. It is here that our team meets for the first time.



We spend the first day on the energetic trails of the city's local mountain. After climbing 200 meters on a purpose-built bike path, we reach the gondola that takes us to the summit of Vodno. At 1,066 meters stands one of the largest crosses in the world—the 68-meter-high Millennium Cross. The mountain is crisscrossed with an extensive network of trails offering plenty of fun. There is even a flow trail leading from the gondola's lower station back into the city, putting wide smiles on our faces. Stojan is especially delighted, as he helped build this very trail, called the "Adrenaline Trail." We hadn't expected such excellent biking infrastructure—what a pleasant surprise.

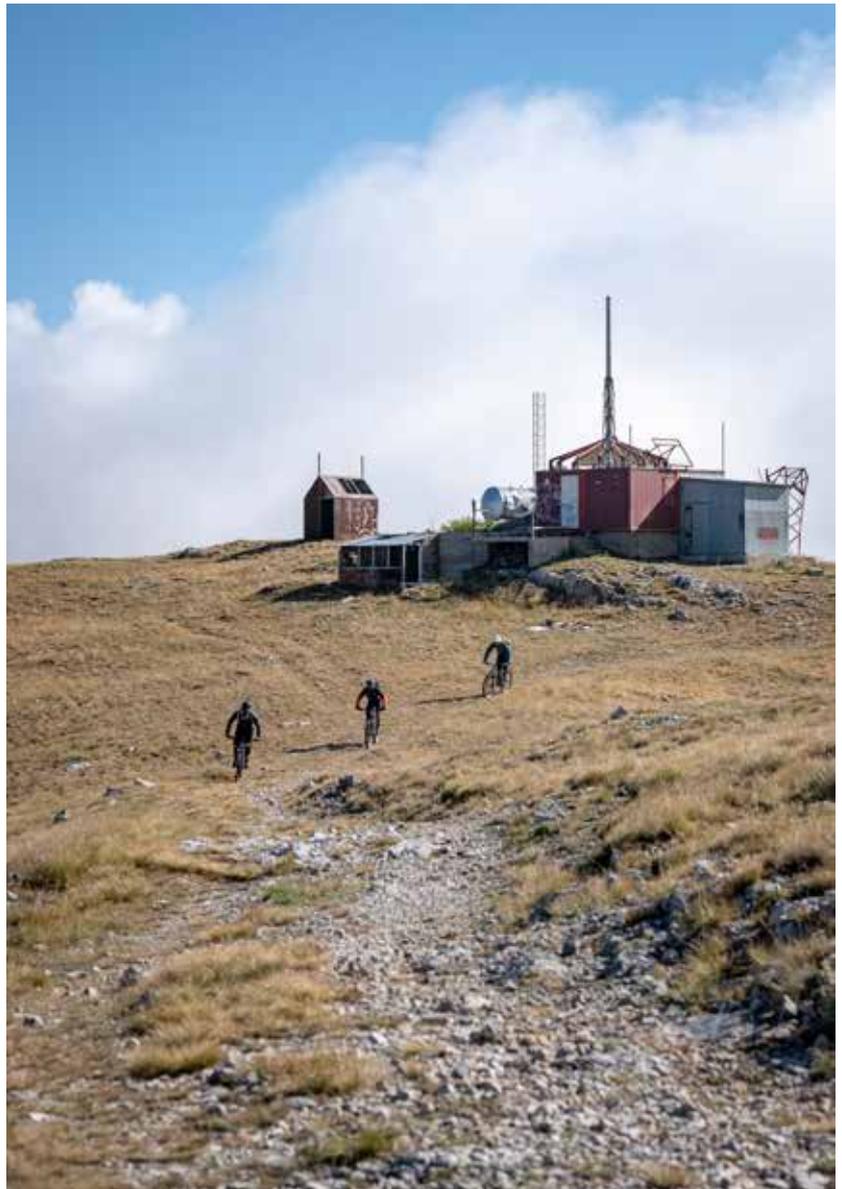
The next day, we drive west in our camper van to the Ljuboten mountain hut. A narrow forest road leads us to the hut at 1,623 meters above sea level. Built in 1931 and recently renovated, it offers comfort comparable to Alpine huts. On the terrace, we enjoy a delicious dinner and a magnificent view stretching across Tetovo all the way to Skopje.

Our crossing of the Šar Mountains begins with the ascent of Ljuboten. From the hut to the 2,498-meter summit, we have to push and carry our bikes. When we finally reach the top, we are breathless—standing with one foot in North Macedonia and the other in Kosovo. In the distance, we see the lifts of Brezovica, Kosovo's largest ski resort and our destination for the day. However, neither the descent nor the continuation across the grassy plateau proves pleasant for cyclists. Long stretches require pushing, and in places the narrow path is completely overgrown.

"It rained a lot this spring. I've never seen the grass this high here," Stojan tries to reassure us. Unfortunately, it doesn't help much. On the very first day, we are truly put to the test. Late in the evening, after a demanding descent in the golden light of sunset, we reach a small ski workshop—our accommodation for the night. It belongs to a friend of Stojan's. Luckily, we don't have to descend all the way into the valley, as plenty of elevation gain awaits us the next day. There are no accommodations along the ridge itself.

The following day promises excitement as well. After winding trails past Lake Karanikoli at 2,200 meters, we reach the small mountain village of Bozovce in the evening after a fun descent. Stojan had reserved accommodation by phone. When we arrive, the building is locked and the owner nowhere to be found. In front of a bar, there's a couch where we sit and order drinks. As the only cyclists far and wide, we quickly become the main topic of conversation in the village.

It gets later and our stomachs growl. No restaurant is open. After several phone calls, a jeep finally picks us up and drives us uphill in the dark to a locked hut. The driver wakes his wife, who serves us pasta just before midnight. Hospitality is extremely important in the Balkans. When we return, the owner has arrived—but his small apartment has no guest rooms. We spread out between the children's room and the living room couch, and I settle onto a soft carpet for a short night's sleep.



The next morning, the muezzin's call to prayer wakes us. It's already hot as we cycle out of the village into increasingly spectacular mountains. The gentle hills of recent days give way to sharp rocky peaks and towers—reminiscent of the Dolomites. After a few hours, the forest road ends. Once again, we push our bikes. At 2,100 meters, exhausted, we set up bivouac by a small lake. It took us eight hours to get here—six of them pushing. Madlaina sums up the day in three words: "Border ridge experiences."

Lush green hills surround us as far as the eye can see. No trails, no lifts, no huts disturb the view. It feels like a fairytale—if it weren't for thoughts of the bears and wolves that live here, causing us to sleep restlessly under the starry sky.

After a long descent through knee-high grass, we reach the road toward Trnica, our next destination. Here our crossing of the Šar Mountains ends. After a refreshing shower at the hotel, local delicacies taste even better. Tavče Gravče—a traditional bean, pepper, and tomato dish—is a must, as is Pastrmajlija, something like a Macedonian pizza. A hungry bear visiting the garbage bins outside the restaurant provides unexpected entertainment. We're glad to observe safely from behind a window rather than from sleeping bags under the open sky.

Unfortunately, an approaching weather front spoils our plans to cross the country's highest mountain massif, Korab. We must change course. Stojan immediately suggests an alternative. As part of an EU-funded project he's involved in, several



trails were developed in the border region with Albania. The project “Cross Border Adventure Biking Trails” carries the subtitle “The Next Level of Adventure Tourism.” Sounds promising.

The next morning, we sleep in, service our bikes, and in the afternoon take a bus to Tanuše. From there, we climb another 400 meters to a gentle summit just above 1,800 meters. The view in the soft evening light is magnificent. We linger, savoring the magical moment. We start the descent far too late. The small bell attached to Stojan’s bike rings constantly to scare off bears. The trail playfully winds through low shrubs before darkness forces us to switch on our headlamps. Soon the black forest swallows us. At first, the path is visible, but it soon becomes completely overgrown. A machete would be more useful than a bike. Without Stojan’s local knowledge and determination as he fights through the undergrowth searching for traces of the trail, we would be hopelessly lost. After what feels like eternity, he finds a way out. Around 11 p.m., we arrive in Žirovnica and enjoy a refreshing drink at a bar. “So, how was the descent?” Gerald grins. “Don’t ask me—ask him,” laughs Stojan. We burst out laughing. Apparently, more bears than bikers have used that trail in recent months.

On the Deshat ridge, connected southward to Korab, Stojan wants to show us one of his favorite trails. We take the bus once more to a mountain pasture. From there, we strap our bikes to our backpacks—the path to the border ridge is too steep to ride. At the summit, a spectacular view opens toward Albania.

“Are you crazy?” is all Gerald can say. “Looks promising,” adds Madlaina. Perfect singletrack in every direction—exactly what we had been searching for.

Stojan points to a small village on the map: “Rabdisht. We’ll be there in two days. The road looks as if it were built especially for mountain bikes.” First, we follow the ridge trail over a small pass. On the Albanian side, we notice a distinct strip of sand. Stojan explains: “It was artificially created to prevent Albanians from escaping. When someone crossed it, footprints revealed the direction of escape.” Under dictator Enver Hoxha, Albania was completely closed off until the 1990s. Today, only a small sign reading “State Border” marks the boundary.

The descent is initially overgrown, flowers lining the trail. Beautiful to look at—though we’d rather see them beside the path than on it. In the forest, the promised “trail fireworks” begin: soft soil, technical sections, sharp turns, fast passages—perfect!

That night, the forecast storms arrive. We drive around Deshat into Albania, visiting the beautiful Orthodox monastery of Saint Jovan Bigorski, built in 1020 and still home to more than 20 monks. A few kilometers farther, we stop at the Monastery of Saint George, run by nuns. Crossing the border is uncomplicated.

Driving through the narrow stone streets of Rabdisht to our guesthouse feels like stepping back in time. We enter Guesthouse Sabriu through large gates. Apple trees line the path to the covered terrace, and a fire crackles in the open fireplace. Sabri and his wife warmly welcome us. We end the day with a delicious dinner.

The mountains are shrouded in clouds and temperatures have dropped. Still, we want to ride the trail we spotted two days earlier. On the ridge, visibility is zero. Clouds cling to the slopes; temperatures are in single digits. At the familiar “State Border” sign, we begin the descent, brakes squealing. The wet trail demands full concentration—it’s extremely slippery. Nearly seven kilometers and 900 vertical meters later, we roll into the old alleys of Rabdisht—another highlight for trail enthusiasts. The map shows there’s still much to discover in this region.

In the evening, we bid farewell to Sabri, as we want to explore the area around Lake Ohrid. Ohrid lies on the shore of the Balkans’ second-largest lake. The region is famous for its numerous churches—said to number 365, one for each day of the year—and for the UNESCO World Heritage old town of Ohrid. Here we meet Jovan





Jovanoski, a friend of Stojan's and another key figure in the Macedonian MTB scene. JJ works as a mountain bike guide and knows the area inside out.

The trails begin just outside the city. The network in Galičica National Park, open to both hikers and bikers, comprises 40 kilometers and 4,000 meters of elevation gain. The lakeshore lies at 700 meters above sea level, while the summit of Lako Signoj rises 1,284 meters higher. From Baba Pass, we climb a rough forest road to the highest point. Antennas and crumbling buildings stand at the top, but the view of two lakes is breathtaking. Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa, located on the border of North Macedonia, Albania, and Greece, are geologically and hydrologically connected. The higher Lake Prespa feeds Lake Ohrid through underground channels, ensuring a constant supply of fresh water.



The Mediterranean-style trails are rocky but rarely steep. During our final descent, the glowing red sun sets behind the Albanian mountains on the horizon. There could be no better way to end the bike tour.

Late into the night, we stroll along Ohrid's promenade, crowded with tourists and locals. Food stalls, drinks, and small trinkets are sold everywhere. Carousels delight children and teenagers, loud music blares from speakers. The contrast to the old stone streets of Rabdisht, just a few kilometers away, could not be greater. There, children ride donkeys between stone houses; here, they drive electric toy cars.

In a cozy pastry shop, JJ and Stojan talk about other trails in North Macedonia—especially the Baba Mountains, which they praise as a true paradise for trail lovers. As we say goodbye, we all know that the next adventure is already waiting. We will meet again to explore undiscovered trails, savor delicious local cuisine, and experience the solitary, wild landscapes of the Balkans.

Goodbye Macedonia—see you again in Macedonia.



Gerhard Czerner

Photos: Madlaina Walther

Source: SOKOL Magazine





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SKI SCHOOL INTERSPORT ROGLA

The Intersport Rogla Snow Sports School has been operating at the Rogla ski resort for 31 seasons. We started in the 1995/96 season with 7 ski instructors. Today, our team consists of 45 ski instructors, 3 receptionists, an assistant manager, and the school director — a total of 50 staff members. We cover all forms of snow sports: alpine skiing, snowboarding, freestyle skiing, and cross-country skiing.

The school's program is very diverse:

www.solasmucanja.eu

For operations at the resort, the school has an Exclusive Agreement with the resort owner Unitur d.o.o. for providing ski instruction at Rogla. Over the years, the school has also operated at other ski resorts, both in Slovenia and abroad. From 2005 to 2010 we worked at the Kravec ski resort. From 2011 to 2018, under the brand Snow Sports Academy, we operated internationally at the resorts Stara Planina and Zlatibor in Serbia and Mavrovo in North Macedonia.

Throughout its operation, the school has set standards for other ski schools in Slovenia. Proof of this is the title "Best Ski School," awarded nine consecutive years within the Golden Snowflake evaluation and the national TV program "Dobro jutro Slovenija." The school is a member of the National Ski School Association of Slovenia, and last season we also obtained the international ISIA Ski School license. In the previous season, we again won first place at the national championship in group formations.



The school has all the necessary on-site infrastructure to operate at the highest level:

- Reception at the ski resort
- Meeting point
- Beginner training area with its own conveyor belt and carousel
- Training area for advanced skiing levels
- Priority lift access
- Teaching aids
- Radio communication system (own AKOS frequency and repeater) – for all instructors
- SKIS system for instructor scheduling via mobile phones and large digital display for schedule overview
- Website: www.solasmucanja.eu
- Awards for course participants
- Equipment for video analysis
-

The school's programs are conducted in the following languages: Croatian, Serbian, English, German, Italian, Russian, French, and partly Hungarian. The school's operations are fully coordinated with the ski resort, meaning the school is open from the first to the last day of the resort's operating season. Last season, 4,630 guests attended our programs, both in group and individual formats.

Prof. Uroš Martinšek, Ski School director



SKI EASY:

A promising approach for teaching skiing



When more than 150 children took their first turns on snow during the **SKI EASY Snow Days**, something bigger than a simple ski lesson was happening. A three-year European collaboration had transformed research, best practice, and field experience into one unified approach to teaching skiing.

The **ERASMUS+ SPORT project SKI EASY (Educational, Accessible, Simple, Youthful)** concluded in December 2023 — but its impact on European ski education could be only beginning. Over three years, SKI EASY focused on one central question:

How can we make learning to ski easier, safer, and more accessible for beginners — while supporting ski teachers with modern tools?

The answer came in the form of the **SKI EASY Unified Teaching Model (UTM)** — a structured yet flexible framework designed specifically for ski beginners.

The SKI EASY UTM is built around five progressive motor skill triggers and integrates:

- Psychological elements such as confidence building and fear management
- Biomechanical principles including balance and posture
- Motor control development for coordination and progression
- Clear didactic strategies for instruction and feedback

This combination ensures that ski teachers are not just teaching movements — they are guiding a complete learning process. The model offers standardization across ski schools while remaining adaptable to different age groups and learning environments.

Practical Tools for Real Slopes

SKI EASY did not remain a theoretical concept. It delivered practical materials that ski teachers can immediately use:

- A Pocket Manual available in 8 partner languages
- Comprehensive online manuals for ski teachers
- Open-access educational materials via the official website (www.skieasy.eu)

These resources are free, user-friendly, and easily transferable across ski schools in Europe and worldwide. They strengthen non-formal sport education and encourage cross-border cooperation among ski teachers.



The project consortium:



Breaking Language Barriers on the Mountain

In today's global ski tourism landscape, ski teachers frequently guide international groups, where clear communication is crucial not only for effective learning but also for ensuring safety on the slopes. To address this challenge, the project developed the **SKI EASY Mobile Application**, featuring:

- Ski terminology dictionaries in 15 languages
- Real-time access via smartphone
- Support for multicultural and multilingual instruction.

The app enhances clarity, reduces misunderstandings, and increases confidence — both for ski teachers and students.

Measurable Impact Across Europe

So far, the results speak for themselves:

- 150+ children experienced their first structured ski lessons during SKI EASY Snow Days
- 110+ ski teachers received SKI EASY training certificates
- Strong cross-border cooperation among European project partners
- Increased pedagogical awareness among ski teachers
- Long-term availability of open-access materials.

SKI EASY has contributed to the modernization and greater standardization of ski education for beginners across Europe.

Next Step: Ensuring Sustainability

Although SKI EASY concluded in 2023, its lasting impact depends on continuous innovation and responsibility across four key areas:

1. Digital Sustainability: The SKI EASY UTM and SKIEASY MOBILE APP must evolve with pedagogical and technological advancements, supported by an active digital platform and expert collaboration.

2. Environmental Responsibility: Ski lessons should integrate climate awareness and sustainable slope practices, teaching young skiers to enjoy snow responsibly.

3. Inclusion and Accessibility: Expanding materials for children with disabilities, neurodiverse learners, and socially disadvantaged groups will strengthen inclusion and align with European sport values.

4. Professional Development: A connected SKI EASY educational ski teachers' network, with webinars, workshops, and blended learning, can turn the project into a thriving, long-term professional community.

Legacy Beyond the Project

SKI EASY shows how European collaboration can help sport education. By blending pedagogy, hands-on experience, and digital tools, it supports ski teacher and empowers ski beginners — creating safer, clearer, and more confident first skiing experiences. The challenge ahead is therefore simple: Keep it unified.

Keep it easy. Keep it sustainable.

If ski schools, federations, and ski teachers continue to build on this foundation, SKI EASY will remain not just a project — but a new standard for ski education for beginners.



Rado Pišot, PhD, project manager
Saša Pišot, PhD, project coordinator
Institute for Kinesiology Research (IKARUS), ZRS Koper



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DMP – Blaženje

Sistemsko blaženje uglasimo z izbiro lesa, slojev titanola in absorpcijskih materialov.

TUN – Končna nastavitev

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TRS – Torzijska togost

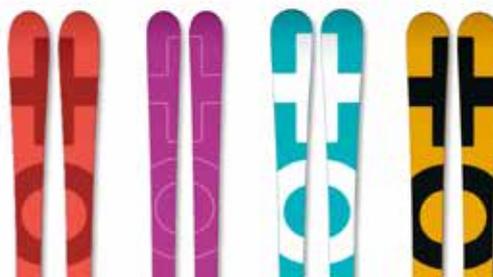
Torzijsko togost nastavimo glede na tvoj slog in zahtevano stopnjo prijema robnikov.

MSK – Masa

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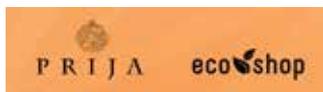
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INTERVIEW

Aleš Piščanc, Owner of Grand Koper

Grand Koper stands by the sea, yet you often speak about the Alps. How do you personally understand the connection between the Adriatic and the Alps, and why is this link more important today than ever before?

I experience the Alps-Adriatic region as an area of exceptionally high quality of life. Not only in logistical terms—where within just about an hour's drive you can experience both the sea and skiing—but also because this region offers all the other conditions for a good life. From a mild climate and stunning nature to low population density... All of this significantly contributes to longevity and overall well-being, both for residents and for visitors who occasionally find themselves in our region.

As an entrepreneur and hotelier, you are based at the crossroads of cultures. How is this blend of sea, hinterland, and mountains reflected in the philosophy of Grand Koper?

Mediterranean culture is strongly expressed in our philosophy. It is most evident in the hotel's design, where maritime motifs and sea colors dominate, and where we pay tribute to the important animals of our region—lobsters, starfish, seashells, as well as goats, the symbol of Koper (Koper-Caprae—"goat island"). Our culture is also clearly reflected in our cuisine. In our restaurant Capra (the Italian word for "goat"), we are devoted to our heritage, tradition, and Mediterranean philosophy.

Cuisine plays a special role in your project. How do you combine the flavors of the sea with Alpine tradition in your kitchen, and why do you believe this combination is so appealing to the modern guest?

I would answer this slightly differently. Cuisine is our identity—our message to our guests. Through it, we communicate who we are, the environment we live in, how we live, what matters to us, and how we treat our surroundings. This is what our guests truly feel, and it is where we can create distinction and make a leap forward. It is not enough to have a beautiful hotel and attractive interiors; the true content of a space lies in its people and in excellent service.

Skiing and the sea may seem like opposites at first glance. How do you see the synergy between winter Alpine experiences and a seaside retreat?

Here, I see one of our greatest advantages. To ski and then descend to the sea in just over an hour is priceless. I believe this is a global rarity. Experiencing two such different worlds within such a short distance is a luxury in every sense.

Do you notice that guests increasingly seek holistic experiences—such as skiing in the Alps and relaxing by the sea during the same trip? How does Grand Koper respond to these trends?

Absolutely—guests are always looking for new experiences. At our hotel, we are very proactive in this regard. We are aware of our advantages and market them successfully. At the same time, we learn a great deal from our guests and their feedback. They are often amazed by the fact that within such a short time, they can experience multiple worlds.

You place great emphasis on local ingredients. How important is cooperation between producers from the Alpine region, the hinterland, and the coast?

Cooperation is crucial in this respect. As mentioned, this is our identity—and through it, we communicate practically everything about who we are

What can Slovenian Istria offer guests who primarily come for mountains, skiing, and winter sports?

I see Slovenian Istria as an extension of the journey for all ski and winter sports enthusiasts. It has been proven that our Mediterranean climate has a positive effect on well-being, especially during periods when there is snow in the Alps. A walk by the sea in the middle of winter—whether under the gentle winter sun or accompanied by the bold bora wind—is a true balm for the soul. If you add local culinary delights, happiness is complete. And we must not forget our rich cultural



Aleš Piščanc, Owner of Grand Koper

heritage, our gems—Piran, Izola, and Koper—as well as our authentic hinterland. Altogether, it is a perfect combination for an unforgettable getaway.

Grand Koper is not just a hotel, but also a story. How do you intertwine sport, gastronomy, and lifestyle within it?

Grand Koper is a hotel only by classification. In our mission, it is a space where, together with our guests, we build a community centered around well-being and quality living. This is reflected in our relationship with guests, with employees, with the environment, and in the service itself. Every single situation is an opportunity to follow our vision.

How do you see Slovenia's role as a boutique destination between the Alps and the Adriatic in the coming years?

Slovenia's tourism development strategy is green and boutique. Our slogan is "less, but higher quality." I believe this is key in communicating with guests—to clearly convey that here they will find something green, boutique, authentic, and of higher quality. Transparency is extremely important. If we are aware of this ourselves and truly live it, we will be sincere and able to share it with our guests. We live and work what we are—and guests can feel that. We do not promise skyscrapers or purchased luxury, but authenticity and quality living in this unique environment.

If you had to describe in one sentence the experience that combines the sea, the Alps, and top-tier cuisine—what would that sentence be?
The Alps, the sea, and exceptional cuisine—at your fingertips!



GRAND KOPER



KOGO

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Kogo, a cook in the Istrian dialect, is a bridge and a crossroads of generations, a place where, tested and good, he unites with a spirit that dares to take risks and try. Kitchen with trendy upgraded home-made recipes and imaginatively served dishes.

KOGO is more than just a restaurant.

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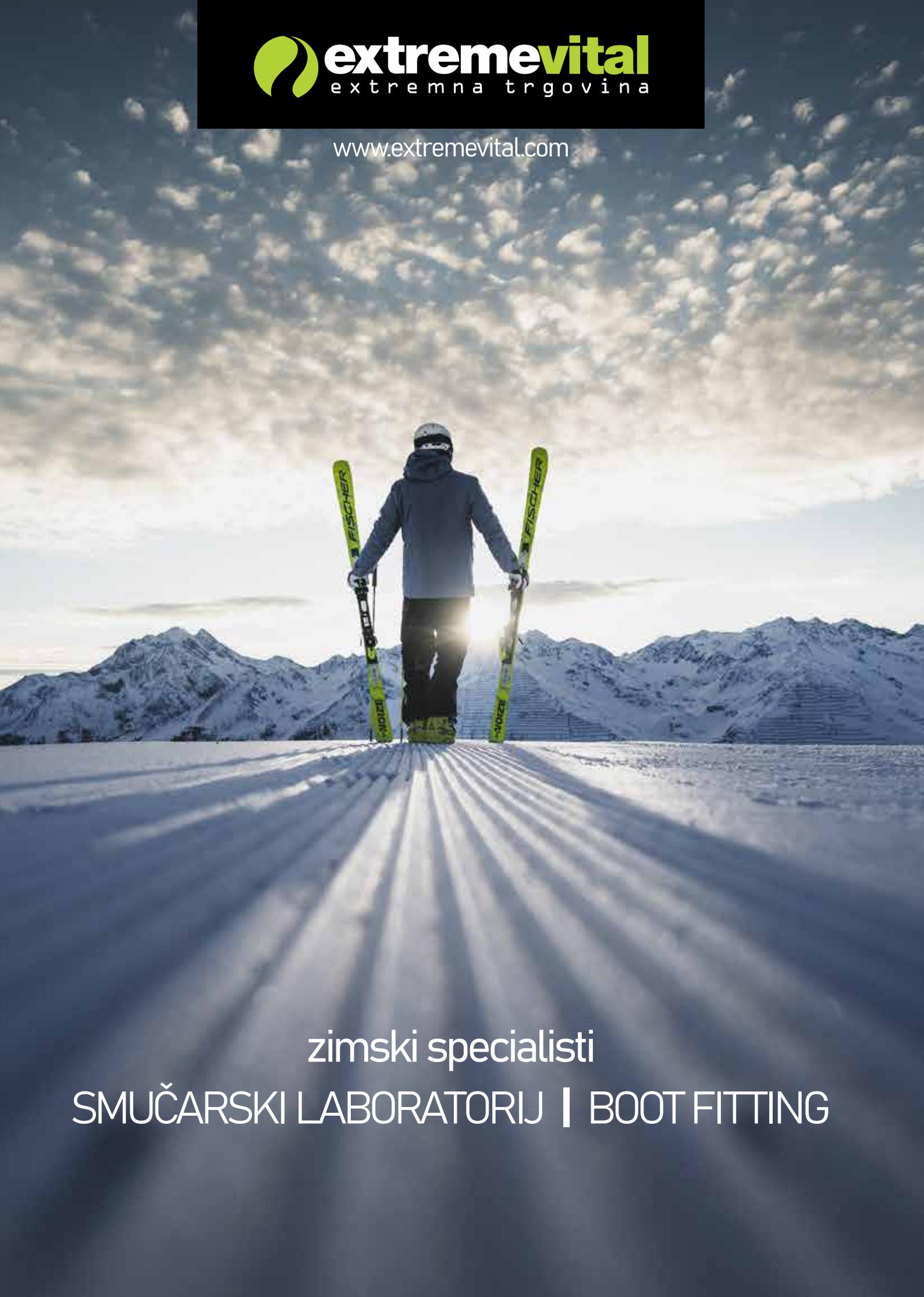


- OKRETNOST IN HITROST
- UČINKOVITOST
- PRILAGODLJIVOST
- UPORABA CELO LETO (CAN-AM)
- DODATKI (PLUG / GOSENICE)
- DELO IN REŠEVANJE
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